

INFECTION.

ISSUE SIX

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AYS
CHUMBAWAMBA
COMMITTEE
POLITICAL ASYLUM
SHOP ASSISTANTS...

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WRONG!

Oh Christ, how long ago was the last issue? That long? 16 months since I last wrote a zine & here I am again - thought you'd got rid of me didn't you? So much has happened since last time...most importantly I fell in love & am glad to say that I still am. Love is wonderful, painful and worth anything...try it! It's made my whole attitude to life very much more positive, given me confidence and much much more! Sounds like a TV commercial doesn't it?

Sooooo....A year in Leeds playing the establishment's games, University? Pah! I just don't believe the elitist self important dorks that populate this place...I guess they'll make good businessmen etc. after their bit of token living etc...It's been fun though so far; making new and wonderful friends and experiencing a whole spectrum of life that I could never have otherwise seen, experiences that have challenged my ideas, perceptions and motivations beyond belief...yeah and even losing a close friend to the real world was, in its own way, a positive experience...I learned a lot. Many highlights: the last Subhumans gig (sniff! Did it really have to end?), a hill in Kendal, sabbing, Chumbawamba or Danbert Nobacon gigs, friends, grooving whilst high as a kite to Culture Shock, beautiful letters from beautiful people, selling all 520 copies of No4/5, Sonic Youth, Nikki, ...so many things yet I still feel that there is more, there is so much to do, to achieve to experience and fuck it I know we can! Let's try!

This issue is probably just more of the same old stuff but this is me; this is my major and most wonderful form of expression - within these pages nestle a part of myself, search it out and hold it close for without this I would be nothing, I would curl up and die or else explode my joy or my frustration or my excitement or my anger in a far more negative manner...or maybe I wouldn't, maybe I'm just as apathetic as everyone else...but I've had enough of ~~wasted~~ wasted hours day and yeare...so if I'm not trying, give me a good kick; there's lots that needs doing etc...

I guess the musical choice will hit my eases again - not hardcore enough, not safe, predictable and mindless enough...no Death Metal rubbish...look if it inspired and warmed me I'll write about it & if you're wondering why the Shop Assestants are here, well go and read their (crap) interview and find out...So much independant music stinks nowadays whether its the inoffensive unchallenging new pop crap with its punk rock pretensions (see 'Are you scared to get happy' zine which brings mindless escapism to new heights) whilst never understanding that punk set out to put an end to the rock n roll bullshit that this stuff epitomises: expensive gigs, elitist we're in a band so... attitude and...I could go on but what's the point? Rock 'n' Roll is product; shiny antiseptic, ~~not~~ bland product...inventive? Honest? Product is what counts in the commercial world, not people, not creativity...rock & roll sucks. Music and people don't.

Why am I writing about music? This is about ~~my~~ life, music is just a means of expression and communication, it's not the be all and end all...there's more...there's you, there's me and there's a whole world to discover & we've only just started...lets get on with it eh?

I was going to change the name of this zine to 'Believe in the Trees', I'm not going to now because I've gone off the phrase & anyway the present name despites its punk rock connotations is reasonably known...so it stays...at least until I get really pissed off with it and think up a better one...which I won't...Boredom is a great inspiration...maybe the positive achievement collective (or whatever we call ourselves) will banish such a thing to places far away...We have many plans, many dreams, I hope that we have the vision and commitment to make them a reality...preently we sell things, you know; records, tapes, zines as well as doing our own publications...maybe a joint zine soon, who knows? Write for details...

This issue: 700 copies...HELP!!!! If you can sell any, please, please, please write and take some off me...please? Why 700 you ask (hah! I bet you didn't!). Well it was the only way to do 20 A4 sides for 25p y'see, so you're getting the same amount as last time for 5p less you lucky people! Oh yes and will people please stop accusing me of making money on this...I don't and I never have done so...and yes Raising Hell is only 15p for the equal of 14 A4 sides but Sik O' does something like 2000 copies and printing gets much cheaper the more you do...so bear that in mind next time you criticise ok..and if you're so goddamn perfect why don't you do something ya apathetic wankers?

I'm already a bit disenchanted with this zine - it's just taking so long to put together, the layout is never as good as I want it to be and once again there's too much on music...oneday I'll write a zine I'm truly happy with.

Friends...irreplaceable...but we're all so blind, blind to the feelings of others, blind to each others pain...how often have I yearned to scream my pain, frustration and hurt only to find no-ones with ears to listen and no-one with eyes to see...yeah we're really liberated, so liberated that we haven't even built communication and honesty between each other...and I'm as bad as the next person...

Hold this close, feel these words and know that I exist, that you exist...and our differences & distance shall always be surmountable...our world is possible because anything is possible!

Idealistic aren't I?

Please write, prove you exist, I shall endeavour to reply. Keep the hope in your heart and the warmth in your soul, let love grow, love, peace, friendship,

Mark...21/11/86...

Many thanks and love to all those who deserve it especially Nikki, Simon, Dave and skinhead Paul for being totally rad, people interviewed, people who sent stuff, everyone I write to, know or have ever met...you're essential! I'm sorry I can't mention you all by name but it'd take hours & I'd be bound to leave too many people out...Hi!

Playlist (or rather what gets the anarchy pad seal of approval)...no particular order: Danbert Nobacon LP/Ambix Arise LP/Concrete Sox-Your turn next LP/AYS-Expect no Mercy EP/SAS-Suavs & Sophisticated? EP/Chumbawamba/ASOM-We are the world? EP/Any Sonic Youth/Swans-Holy Money LP/Raping a Slave 12"/Dag Nasty-Can I say LP/Old X Ray Spex/Adverste/Penetration SINGLES/Political Asylum-EP/Culture Shock-living history tape All MJB/Subhumans/Rudimentary Peni/Zounde/Antiassct/Minor Threat/Dead Kennedys/Stupids/Oi Polloi/Crass/CCM3/Furious Party EP/Mottek-Hypnose LP/Reagan Youth-LP/Shockabilly-greatest hite 12"/Any Kate Bush/Flux-Uncarved Block LP...and lots more.....

CHAOS UK/EXTREME NOISE TERROR - EARS/AUGHTER LP/DISORDER IN A STATE Nol (20p & SAE from Simon, Flat 10.5, North Hill Court, North Hill Rd, Leeds, LS6 2ER)...yes it's pure coincidence that he's a great friend of mine but this zine rules! It's got that wonderful 'this is a fanzine so I don't give a fuck' feel and any zine that mentions clangers that often has to be rad...other fave parts are the big Flux interview (especially the cat), & a fabbo article by petey of Stalag 17 plus lots of other dead cool stuff like Concrete Sox, Toxic Reasons etc. Yeah buy this one! (alright can I have that fiver now you big hunky thing?)

I've got some space left on this page so I thought I'd mention one of the best new zines I've seen for yonks..... IN A STATE Nol (20p & SAE from Simon, Flat 10.5, North Hill Court, North Hill Rd, Leeds, LS6 2ER)...yes it's pure coincidence that he's a great friend of mine but this zine rules! It's got that wonderful 'this is a fanzine so I don't give a fuck' feel and any zine that mentions clangers that often has to be rad...other fave parts are the big Flux interview (especially the cat), & a fabbo article by petey of Stalag 17 plus lots of other dead cool stuff like Concrete Sox, Toxic Reasons etc. Yeah buy this one! (alright can I have that fiver now you big hunky thing?)

Yeah!!



"War is confirmation of the imposed reality in which we exist, a constant violent reminder of the lengths to which those that control reality will go. We are prisoners of that reality until we create our own."...Crass 1982.

...and it still holds true...the fight is, and always has been, to create our own reality, to create (and live) our own lives out of the chaos that mainstream authoritarian society has created with its 'grab as much as you can and fuck the consequences' philosophy - a philosophy of domination and exploitation: the mass terrorism of the threat of nuclear/chemical/biological annihilation, the murders of countless millions of animals in the abattoirs and laboratories of the world, the mass murder of millions of human beings by slow starvation the world over (including here) and ultimately the murder of our planet by the powers of greed that say if you can make a profit out of it then do it: rainforest removal, nuclear waste dumping, toxic waste dumps with subsequent seepage into the ecosystem, increasing desertification as a result of quick profit agricultural methods...more destruction...we're on the brink of extinction with a blindfold on...

I don't know what the answers are but society, as a whole, has done a fine job of screwing up this planet and its inhabitants...I don't believe in the possibility of revolution-that must come from the mass of population and I can see no difference between the working class and the ruling class; they hold the same beliefs. We are taught to compete, to grab, to want more, we are taught greed and selfishness...the TV screens, the advertising hoardings, the papers, the shops all promote the accumulation of wealth to be the purpose of life- the idea is subtly (and sometimes not so subtly) put across that if you don't have a new video, or a plush leather 3 piece suite or a dishwasher, or a new car or a freezer full of the expertly sliced and wrapped flesh of a murdered animal then your life cannot be complete, you are not a perfect human being and you'd better be sorry. And thus in a frenzy to appear to be the perfect human being/family with all the best possessions we work, strive and often die to achieve a dream existence, a false existence that we can never fully achieve because it is an ideal that is designed never to be achieved except by a small select ruling group who provide an example of that ideal. This has a number of effects, people will do anything to achieve the consumer culture dream; they'll take any shit, do any work, give away any right, sanction any war to obtain that dream...and because they strive for that dream so hard they will stay exactly where they are...right under the thumb of the rich and powerful...who themselves believe in exactly the same concept...only they're giving the orders and if it was the working class in that position then it wouldn't be any different...

This greed, this striving for more and greater luxuries is killing our earth and it's killing us...Western consumer culture cannot keep it's level of wealth without exploiting the 3rd world to the hilt for whatever: Uranium, oil, and other minerals, land for beef herds, tobacco, coffee, tea, sugar, cheap foodstuffs...the rich countries of the world create poverty in the 3rd partly because of it being a 'natural' byproduct of their greed, partly because it's advantageous to keep the 3rd world that way; a poor country cannot be a trading rival and cannot pose a military threat in any real terms to a rich one. Thus ~~we~~ we, for greed, allow mass starvation because land that could grow food is instead used to grow western consumer luxuries...while millions starve we feast...It also results in repression of dissident groups who ask why the poor are starving and if by any chance the people manage to throw off the shackles of 1st world domination (or try to) then the superpowers of this world will use military force to bring them back in line - that's what's

happening in Nicaragua and El Salvador where American sponsored thugs are murdering, torturing and raping those who only want to control their own lives...I could go on but you already know the facts...the rich and powerful will do anything to protect their positions of power - including destroying us all in a thermonuclear holocaust.

Greed is instilled in us, we are encouraged to consume a bit and then to take more and more...People accept this as a cover up for something that is missing far far deeper inside themselves. This quest, greed, makes people cold, callous and selfish, incapable of seeing other human beings beyond what they can gain from those people...We use each other as mere tools for our pleasures and ambitions whether it's the wife used as a work machine, the worker exploited for his/her labour or the friend used to bolster the ego rather than to share something special with (it's the same in some sexual relationships - using each other for pleasure as only a set of pleasurable parts rather than as human beings for any real shared and beautiful experience)...We are not only destroying this planet we are also destroying fragile bonds between us and all that is beautiful in our lives...is it really what you want?

Whilst we continue to overconsume we are an essential part of the consumer culture game...and as always the answer lies with us all, each and everyone of us...it is by our greed and acceptance of prevailing materialistic values that we allow the whole sick mess to exist, that we allow the possibility of a life of peace freedom and respect to slip through our fingers like sand...It is our greed, it is our job to nullify that greed...we must destroy it in ourselves...

"...until we change ourselves first, from the inside out.

We can start by not lying so much and treating other people like dirt. It's easy not to base our lives on how much we can scam. And you know

it feels good to lift that monkey off our backs."

n' (whoops!) -Dead Kennedys-'Stars & stripes of corruption

and we can do that, destroying the urge to possess and dominate within ourselves. We might not be able to change the world but we can change our world - we can change ourselves and what is around us and thus if enough people do it the world changes tp.

But we cannot just change ourselves, we must change in other things that we do, the internal change has to occur but ultimately it has to be manifested in outside changes as well. We cannot destroy greed in ourselves and still continue to support and contribute to a society that survives on greed, exploitation and murder. We have to start to create alternatives to, and within, the sick reality that surrounds us and that is how we create our own reality and change theirs. Creating alternatives is no easy matter but it can be done in all spheres of our lives - it is not easy because it involves us taking an active part in our own lives rather than letting someone else live them for us...it, in effect, requires us to make our lives real & (have you ever felt more alive than when you struggle the hardest? I know this.)

This zine represents part of one alternative - the alternative print network. The punk (for want of a better word) movement could (and sometimes does) represent a real alternative to the consumerist 'make as much money as possible and treat the audience like shit' world of mainstream music. It is a network of independent record labels bands, poets, writers and people all involved, all of equal importance...though it's not always that way.

Other alternatives exist: Squatting; the reclaiming and maintaining of property that should belong to us all for proper usage as homes or for that matter any other purpose. We can create our own shops and retail outlets run on co-operative, non exploitative sharing principles, we can create our own entertainment and meeting spaces...in effect we can do anything if only we try hard enough, we can create our own alternatives and our own lives...

However things aren't always as easy as that because the authorities, the rich, and the multinational companies will not idly sit back and let us sweep their system from under their feet and replace it with our own - where any real alternative can be perceived to be making an impact then it will be dealt with by their usual tactics...sheer, terrifying force...and that is what has been happening in Wiltshire and around Stonehenge for the last two years.

Stonehenge and the convoy represent something very special-it's a real manifestation of a real... (continued on page 18).



The Joy of Living/The Apostles - Death to Wacky Pop 7" EP (Fight Back) (W&W)

I got this through the post very recently (thanks Julie!) - entirely unexpected! I don't know why but I actually like this, surprising for it's got all the hallmarks of anything the Apostles get remotely involved in (ie: grungy production, Andy Martin's endless guitar solos and flat (but interesting) singing) but along with tasteful female vocals and some nice acoustic guitar on other tracks you end up with a beautiful record with just enough bite so that it sticks, and holds...and yes, grows! Ooooh...a definite.

Correction Time: It says in the introduction that there's 20 A4 sides to this as you've probably realised there isn't. Quite simply because it was just extra work that I didn't have my heart in, also it makes completing this issue a lot easier...Also if you bought this off me at a rig it should have cost you 20p rather than 25p...Why? Well 25p is a somewhat awkward amount of cash and the lower price should mean I'll sell more-hopefully! The price from distributors should still be 25p to cover postage costs and also 25p by mail to cover various other costs i.e. reduction, pens, glue and people who send money and no SAE (what do they think I am, rich?). Overall therefore I shall make a loss on this so if anyone could do us a benefit or the like I'd be really grateful...And for interests sake here's my Leeds address which is only correct until June 1987...OK?

Mark Freeman/Flat F3.02/Henry Price Building/Clarendon Rd/LEEDS/ LS2./

Apology time: Sorry to Jon AYS for being so vicious over your meat eating habit-I only just found out that you're allergic to many vegetables...however I don't think this excuses you cos it's quite possible and easy to be a lactovegetarian and not eat green vegetables...in fact I can think of some vegans who live on just soya stuff, potatoes, rice etc...like I said there's no excuse for eating meat...right? There was going to be an article on veganism in here but I never got it together...In A State zine has an excellent article on this subject so go and look that up.(review on page 2).....

Cyanide Scenario are an excellent new band from Camberley in Surrey featuring Al ex Dear Departed on guitar(see next page)...and they've got a 6 track EP coming out soon on Evilpeak records (run by the ex Napalm Death guitarist I think). I've heard a tape of it and I was well impressed; there's a very definite Banshees influence in it as well as anarcho type stuff so if you're into good music then keep your eyes peeled for it...it's good to see anarchoist bands branching out into something other than metal!

Heavy Discipline - Extreme Mutilation Increases tape (11 & SAE from Paul, 23 Walnut Crescent, Kettering, Northants, NN16 9PX). Quite an interesting tape though the shouted (and very simplistic) vocals let it down somewhat-I'd imagine the slightly metal tinged thrash encased here would be excellent performed live but it sounds muted and caged...distant...on this tape.

In the post recently I've received these six records from Nick Toczek for the purpose of reviewing so here are the results of many hours of tort...erm...listening...I've tried to pull no punches and express how I feel about each record. My own musical taste shall most likely vary widely from yours so do not accept a word of this; do your own investigating. I can only express what I think. Ok, the records are graded on a star system from * is abysmal to **** being the musical equivalent of the second coming...now that's sorted out let's get on with it:

Headhunters- 'Way of the South' 12" EP (Quiet) (2).
Pretentious industrialism? The title track boasts one of those heavily pounding rhythms that ultimately, due to its lack of character, bores rather than blows your socks off...Big Black do it better. The B side is worse.
There has to be a good point however and that's the cover which I love so go along to the record shop, nick that and forget the rest.

Legacy Of Lies- 'You and Who's Army?' 12" EP (Quiet) (2).

WAY OF THE SOUTH
This record reminds me tremendously of the earlier New Model Army records...which is funny 'cos they used to be called New Model (who's 'Chilean Warning') single was brilliant). This new 12" is nowhere as near as good: any aggression, anger...in fact any emotion is lost through an overly professional production & music that lacks PRESENCE enough to impact points upon the listener. I get the feeling that they're only playing at the politico stuff i.e. they're just another rock band where image matters more than honesty, another brick in the wall of rock 'n' roll bullshit...which if true is a pity because the music is very catchy melodic; Nikki says they remind her a bit of early Adam and the Ants and I'm inclined to agree...there is a definite touch of that here. Yes I like it but I can't quell my unease over their level of commitment...and the product 'anti-war' imagery sucks.

Nick Toczek's Brit-anarchists - 'More to Hate...than meets the eye' (Martyrhate) (2).
God this is so cliched!

Witness "Living on the breadlines" sung in a put on reggae voice to limp wristed musical impersonations: "Living on de breadline, honest gunvor, it wasn't me..." yeeuk! The 'punk' stuff on the other side is little better: half hearted mimicing of a more tuneful style that couldn't cut soft Granose...nothing sticks out or in my head, I'm sorry Nick but it's all been done before & better...this sounds like a parody of both musical styles...your poetry's great, this is not.

Public Heirs- 'What's going on?' 12" EP (Quiet) (2).

Not much really and I thought humour (?) like that name died 9 years ago. That's not really fair since "Dub" and "Dong" are quite imaginative and enjoyables; otherwise its dated and weary punk and R & B retreads. Alright but oh so very very boring...Is this a joke? I think it has to be, listen to the vocals on "South Africa" ...no serious band produces stuff like this...do they?

Red Letter Day - 'Released Emotions 12" EP (Quiet) (2).

The walls sliding past my face, their velocity increasing as they come closer. Faces; distorted, pulled, stretched across my vision...eyes learning, faces grimacing flashing past my eyes...fast forwarding through reality...

The single yellow unblinking eye caught full in the face, following my movement across the floor. Everything fades, the single eye becoming the whole of reality the yellow circle filling my mind. Mysterious and detached, unseen but ever present...eyes flicking, faces set in concentration. You know that they're there -if you're lucky you can forget, I never can...the cameo remains, their eyes burning into my neck...their EYES...held for a split second and stare away; I looked into your soul and felt the terror freeze in my veins, the panic rise in my throat...I can feel your hatred, sence how much you despise my existance... existance held, reared, then snatched away. I face your cold dead space; pinks and whites, ribbed and torn...the dull eyes of a face detached, the carcass...I can taste bile in my mouth but face the glass nevertheless.

A thin frail old woman walks to the brown stained man in white...sharp edged steel rises and falls, wrapped in sterile white, whisked away to be consumed...I close my eyes, face and hands shaking, a tear rolls down my face...

"Are you alright sonny?"
Concern...it contrasts strangely with what his wife just placed in her basket...
"Yes, fine thanks," I lie, blowing my nose...turn away...

My feet dangling, the brick wall cold against my backside, my jeans are getting thin...a spider crawls across the mortar from where a blade of grass pokes...the only sence in the midst of this...this what? Insanity I suppose...

This is what I'm apt to describe as a pleasant surprise especially after all the other crud that Quiet insist on releasing,,,anyway enough gripping, onto the music...very well composed songs with a good powerful guitar sound & fine pop/punk melodies: sorta like the Ramones or the Buzzcocks in lots of ways- typical indie chart potential. Lyrics are in the love song arena which to my mind is a negative point that I choose not to dwell upon...just a bright cheerful piece of nostalgia for timewarped persons such as myself...Why don't anarchist bands sound like this? Turnpike Cruiseras - 'Extra Flesh' 12" EP (Jettisoundz) (2).

Oh yes, I can just imagine it; all the quiff heads trotting down to their local HMV or whatever to snap this up...I wouldn't be because I hate boring unchallenging crap like this...why do people write such uninspired crap?

Addresses.
Quiet Records, 1st Floor, The Metrostore, 231 The Vals, London W3.

Nick Toczek, 5 Beech Terrace, Undercliffe, Bradford, W. Yorks.
Jettisoundz Ltd., PO Box 30, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs.

LETTING MIND & PEN WANDER THROUGH A FIELD STREWN WITH CONFUSION & POPPIES...

Everything exists to be destroyed. Nothing ever stays in a state of no change. Attempts to do so lead to accelerated destruction. Arrest anything's development at your own risk for it will destroy you.

Nothing is sacred. All positions that are held, all places of authority, all orders and rules exist only in this moment of time. Their existence is transitory and may cease at any moment. All things can and will be defiled and misused and subsequently destroyed. Remove them and they can no longer be misused.

Peoplekind has no justification to be involved. By our actions we destroy ourselves. Those who resist the natural flow are invariably removed. We must flow with the natural processes and accept our own insignificance. We are but a part of the whole.

Life as one.

In our present state of existence- misusing, abusing and destroying our environment; cut off from the forces that formed us, blindly and selfishly we are blundering towards our own destruction. Blinded by our pride and false feelings of superiority. We will act as our own natural limiter and destroy ourselves in a haze of light...heat...a holocaust upon earth.

Your progress is destruction. Your unacknowledged final aim is annihilation. I want no part of your mindless games...

...Mark 1985.

Well folks, isn't it amazing what you write when you switch off and let your fingers do the talking...

Tapes & Stuff...

CULTURE SHOCK - 'Living History' ...£60 and 50p or £1.20 from Dick, 2 Victoria Terrace, Melksham, Wilts. With the Subhumans now little more than a memory and a pile of classic records Dick's new outfit is a welcome relief from a sea of somewhat noisy (but exciting) hardcore bands. From the ex bands of the other members I wasn't really sure what to expect but what you do get are 10 great reggae or Ska songs with the occasional punky bit, groovy base playing and all that topped off by Dick's unmistakable voice...yeah this is great, turn up that bass control and groooooove...damn good lyrics as well. Did anyone other than myself see them doing "Stonehenge" on the program on TV about the convoy and all that? Fab stuff! Get it!

SMART PILLS - 'All and Everything' (£2 & SAE from Stoat Hall, 6 Cleveland Row, Bathwick, Bath, Avon). In a word...interesting; a stunning in that it's bewildering mixture of acid damage psychedelia, Siouxsie style post punk and a touch, oh ever so faint, of hardcore all blended into 90 minutes of quite distinctive music. Very interesting Egyptian (I suppose) imagery - anarchogothism (in a nice way) anyone? Worth investigating.

Various Artists - 'Stop the Killing now!' £1 and SAE from Braindead cassettes c/o Gary, 117 Slessor road, Catterick, Richmond, N. Yorks, DL10 7NN. Quite an interesting benefit tape for the ALF and Hunt Sabs and worth buying for that reason alone methinks. Highlights are great thrash from the Stupids (as always), the tuneful brilliance of Dan and good anarchocore stuff from Hex. Lowlights are the Desecrators with millions of wanky metalish guitar solos, yuk!

DEAR DEPARTED - 'Bad News' (contact Al, 107 Longlands Way, Heathside, Camberley, Surrey.) Well the Dear DEparted are well and truly gone now (living up to their name I suppose but Al has a new much better band going now who play some mindblowingly weird and relaxing music, he also runs a tape label so write to him. (Hello Al!)).

THE COMMITTEE



THIS
IS MY
WAY OF
saying
NO

The Committee are one of those many bands that I have read much about but never really taken any great trouble to explore further until one day in early March I recieved in the post a copy of their 2nd demo tape; 'News from Nowhere' and a letter asking for a bit of publicity to make their presence better known...

...and so they should be! The tape has an endearing DIY feel to it; although some may well say that this is a negative attribute I would disagree- it adds a lot of charm to their sound.

Comparisons? You want comparisons? Okay, it's like a fusion of the 3 Johns and the early Omega Tribe with touches of the Fall, powerful but with an ear for subtlety, garagy but refined, sometimes mellow, always attentive...never quite cutting loose but pleasant and listenable with a slightly raw feel that is never over-emphasised; understated drum machine (I think), clear bass, precise guitar work and lots of vocals. The lyrics are not overly specific but the aim may be to promote thought rather than hand ideas out on a plate...which, in my mind at least, would only encourage mindless following. The

vocals at times do not mesh as well as they could but the ideas are there. All in all it's a good, varied and enjoyable tape having for me the unusual effect of casting my mind back to when there seemed to be a far greater variety of bands in the anarchist network. The Committee belong to that tradition of great music and ideas communicated with integrity and passion; their existence serving as a useful reminder of what is possible...eh for more bands willing to experiment and diversify!

The Committee have, to these ears, the great ability to break through to a wider audience; their music is accessible enough to do just that. The first step on the vinyl road is their "Open Your Eyes" 12" EP on Fire Records (via the Cartel and Rough Trade), a cassette copy of which I was kindly sent. It shows a definite advance in the Committee sound to a more dance feel than on the demo-maybe its the better recording quality but it loses none of their charm and band next door quality. The most notable change however is the improvement in the vocal work; the different voices working together at long last rather than fighting in an attempt to gain some sort of superiority. Even though this may not be the most inspiring piece of music that I have ever heard it is a pleasantly vibrant and listenable recording that deserves to be heard.

So there you have it Ladies and Gentlemen-The Committee, worthwhile, honest and unpretentious-give them a listen! The demo tape ("News from Nowhere") is available for £1 & SAE from Mark and Adrian, 171 Torbay Rd, South Harrow, Middx.



Thrash? Oh yes, definitely thrash but not just any old thrash. No, no...this is special. From the moment the needle touches the vinyl to the final "click...click...click" of the runoff groove its raw, searing thrash of the most effective kind.

I've never quite been able to pin down what it is that makes music special but I've always been sure when I've heard music that is. So what is it about AYS that sends my mind careering round a rollercoaster of total exhilaration? The terrible name? No, I don't think so, it's more the inspired sharp preciseness of the songs— packing so many ideas into so few seconds; songs exploding out of silence: razor sharp guitar; slicing and shredding through the air topped by hoarse vocals spat out at a fantastic rate. The whole experience ensconced into the innocuous looking "Expect no Mercy" 6 track 7" EP on Mottarhate records, a piece of vinyl that few can ever hope to equal...it's that insanely good.

Look AYS are incredible — an amazing fusion of speed, intensity and committed personal lyrics that left me wondering and questioning at the situations that must have inspired them. They leave me breathless, my mind tingling with excitement...and with the 16 track "Someplace Special" 12" looming on the horizon I just can't wait to experience more...

Well after all that there was just no way that I couldn't feature AYS so I wrote to John (their singer) and the following postal interview was the result:

ALRIGHT! HERE WE GO!...WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES A HARDCORE BAND? WOULD YOU CALL YOURSELVES A 'PUNK' BAND? WHAT DOES PUNK MEAN TO YOU? (CLICHED OPENING QUESTION I KNOW BUT I CAN'T HELP IT.)

If anything, yes, AYS are a punk band. If punk is judged by attitudes & moral actions rather than by some kind of strict dress code then we are definatly a punk band, if it comes to the latter then, no, we are not a punk band, if you see what I'm getting at. 'Punk' to me means open mindness & progression, not some kind of 3 cherd musical style; the same with hardcore, that is if there is such a thing, there's really no need for any predetermined labels but again that comes back to open mindness. I think people should just listen to music & hopefully try & get something out of it, not just sum it up in one word be it punk, thrash, hardcore, metal or shit. Invariably people will do the opposite though. Oh well...

WHAT SORT OF REACTION DID THE EP GET; WERE YOU PLEASED WITH IT? HOW WELL HAS IT DONE?

Surprisingly the EP was very well recieved which we didn't wholly expect, obviously we were prepared for something, but generally it's been a lot better than we could have imagined, thankfully. At the time we were pleased with it, but looking back now it could have been mixed better & I think we could have done more with it, but it's really just learning how to better ourselves in the studio which will come in time. We've been told the sales are around 4000, but I couldn't say for

...sure— somewhere around that figure.

WHY DID THE DEVIL'S PENTANGLE APPEAR ON THE EP COVER? WHAT ARE YOUR OPINIONS ON SATAN & THE OCCULT? ON YOUR LOGO ON THE FLYERS A CROSS APPEARS INSTEAD OF A PENTANGLE, WHY?

The pentagram on the cover is in fact crossed out (not on the logo though— Ed), just saying that it's a waste of time & is nonsensical garbage. My views on satanism & the occult? Well what a fuckin' waste of my time. If people have to base themselves on how evil they are then what a waste of their time. I suppose its a matter of opinion on what is 'good' & what is 'evil', ain't it funny how most of them people say they believe in the devil, yet dismiss God as a fantasy? Most of those idiots would probably run a mile if in all their 'dark holiness' did manage to conjure up some demon or shit. Laughable to say the least. I dunno, I just think its bullshit, up to them I suppose though. The cross is there on most of our flyers as a reaction to that & to symbolise goodness & cleanliness...in my opinion anyway.

WHY DID YOU COVER MINOR THREAT'S "IN MY EYES" (AND OTHER SONGS LIVE)? ISN'T THIS A BIT CLOSE TO ADULATION/HERO WORSHIP? ON THIS SUBJECT WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE ROCKSTAR ETHIC, IS THE DIVIDE BETWEEN BAND AND AUDIENCE DESIRABLE?

Everyone asks this...wonder why? When we first started we used to jam or warm up with "In My Eyes" & someone suggested we should play it....we did & it stuck. It's a good loosensr for everyone anyway; if no one picks up on any of our stuff for the first time, they will at least relate to "In My Eyes" and perhaps listen to our songs more. It's just fun really & is a good tune with an extremely valid point behind it...& we like playing it.

No, I don't think it's anything to do with adulation. For what reason? Minor Threat were a great band, nothing else & as I said for the reasons above — we like it. The rockstar ethic is a myth — if anyone chooses to worship some fuckin' 'punk god', 'metal god' or whatever, that's their problem. There is no divide between band & audience.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR QUITE EXTREME ANTI-METAL STANCE PLEASE? WHAT IS IT ABOUT METAL THAT YOU DON'T LIKE? YOU WERE ONCE RUMOURED TO BE A METAL BAND, HOW COME? ANY COMMEENTS?

I haven't got a clue why we were rumoured to be a metal band, the only reason I can suggest is that as the drummer & myself have hair that points in a different direction to that of supposed punk bands. But then again, the bassist & guitarist have skinheads so maybe we should be an Oi! band according to some people. There's always rumours about something or other, it satisfys some people, so I shouldn't bother too much if I was you really.

I don't think we've got an 'extreme anti-metal stance' too much. OK so metal may not exactly be flavour of the month with us but one of my favourite bands play music that could be considered 'metal' but the whole idea of HM etc. is inept and absurd & is the exact opposite to the entity of punk in itself. I suppose it's people that go through phases I'm against most, not exactly people into metal as they know no better than the music they're into, but when ex-people I used to know are now 'going metal' it just makes you think: 'What the fuck were you in the first place then?' Some Metal bands are good, most musically, but only a few write semi-decent lyrics. Good ones? Trouble (ultimately), Zoetrope, Hirax, Death Row—but attitude wise—who knows?

ADMIT YOU'RE SHIT.



Continued...

WHAT'S THE POINT BEHIND AYS - IS IT COMMUNICATION OR JUST ENTERTAINMENT? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BANDS WHO JUST SET OUT TO ENTERTAIN AND NO MORE?

The point behind AYS is Colin Jerwood's foot. No, it is, enjoyment (for us anyway), it's a good way to stem aggression rather than on other people. I hope we can channel our aggression into music rather than into spitefulness or wickedness. The communication is there only if people can relate to your empathies and hold onto something you've offered; you can only offer it & never force anyone to believe it. So if people think "Oh, AYS..." then, yes, we have communicated, if not, there's not a lot we can do, as I said, we can only offer ourselves.

Fun bands? It's up to them. If that's what they want & what people want, fine. If you have the chance to explain something I'd rather use it than say "Hey, let's party." But if anyone wants to invite us to any parties...well, you got my address. DO YOU THINK BEING ON MORTARHATE COULD IN ANYWAY LIMIT YOU - I MEAN IT COULD GIVE PEOPLE REASON TO IGNORE YOU I.E. COMMENTS LIKE "JUST ANOTHER CONFLICT BAND". HOW DO THINGS WORK BETWEEN YOU AND CONFLICT?

I think whatever label you're on is gonna limit you in some way or another. It comes back once again to openmindedness & tolerance not musical style or whatever record label you happen to be on. Well, no-one has ever said "Just another Conflict band" because for starters- musically we're nothing like them, we're just on the same label. It's like saying "Oh Play Dead are like Discharge because they're on Clay". It's silly to judge a band for that reason & would sincerely hope people have more integrity than to do that.

There's no real deal with Conflict as such. They pay us to go in the studio, we record something, they release it & after all the costs have been broken even, we get 80% out of every 100%. That's the idea anyway.

WHAT MADE YOU GO STRAIGHT OR HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN SO? WHAT ARE YOUR OBJECTIONS TO ALCOHOL, TOBACCO ETC. ETC.?

Just a common sense thing really, if anything takes control over your mind you can't really be much of a person in the first place. It's something that should be instinct but I guess it's something that has to be learnt through error first and realizing your mistakes, & facing up to the stupidity of it.

WHAT INSPIRES YOUR LYRICS? HAVE PEOPLE REALLY FUCKED YOU AROUND AS MUCH AS THE LYRICS SUGGEST?

Anything & everything inspires our writing. If I see something I consider inhumane or just blatantly stupid I'm definitely gonna say something about it - and music is the perfect vehicle for it at the moment.

No, it's not necessarily people fucking me over that I got my gripes against, it's generally peoples attitudes concerning self conduct and naiveness. Everyone gets abused at times & I think people have a responsibility to rise above that & treat people the way they expect to be treated.

DO YOU HAVE WEIRD OR UNUSUAL DREAMS? FEEL LIKE RELATING ANY OF THE INTERESTING ONES?

I usually can't remember most of my dreams - only for a few minutes after waking up. I've noticed the weirder dreams happen usually when sleeping at someone else's house. I suppose it's in your subconscious that you're not in your normal environment and I guess your brain knows and reacts to that. DO YOU THINK YOUR IDEAS OF TOTAL HONESTY WITHIN YOURSELF & BETWEEN YOU AND OTHER PEOPLE APPLY THEMSELVES TO WIDER CONCEPTS, WAYS OF LIVING, PHILOSOPHIES ON LIFE ETC.? DO YOU FEEL ANY COMMON GROUND WITH ANARCHISTS OR WHATEVER?

There is no wider concept than human life/nature itself; philosophies & theories grow and occur as you grow and mature mentally and if one applies themselves honestly to all matters in one's life then life can only get better in itself, & for

other people who come in contact with you.

I feel some common ground with some "Anarchists" in that I believe in respect for human life, but I have more in common with individuals than hyped up theoretical bullshit or collectives or whatever.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ANIMAL RIGHTS? DO YOU THINK ANIMALS HAVE THE SAME RIGHT TO LIFE AS HUMAN BEINGS? WHY DO ALL OF YOU (EXCEPT TOM HORROR) EAT MEAT?

To a certain extent I think animals have the same rights as humans, & to a degree I agree with some aspects of animal rights but yeah, you're right - I do eat meat. I do so because I don't eat a lot of vegetables with the the exceptions of potatoes etc. so it wouldn't be viable for me not to eat meat. I also eat meat because I like it, nothing else, it's that simple. If you're gonna say that animals have rights then you've got to say vegetables and plant life have rights. Both are organic matters, both are made up of cells, both have brains (plants have neutrons) & therefore are living matters with the capacity to feel & feel pain, but I don't fancy eating too many stones & rocks because they are inanimate objects. You'd have to ask Sean & Simon why they eat meat, I don't think it's important for me to justify what I eat.

(Editors comment time: Needless to say, as a vegan I disagree quite strongly with the above comments and have to reply to the above. Firstly when I ate meat I didn't eat many vegetables I do now. I also liked the taste of meat but had enough compassion and love in my heart to stop. Vegetarian food is in my experience tastier and far more varied than animal food. In my opinion the above excuses are no excuse, Meat IS Murder & there is NO justification for its consumption. I'll deal with the other points elsewhere but neutrons are subatomic particles and thus all atoms have them, I think John means neurons.) AND AFTER ALL THAT ON WE GO...DO YOU THINK VIOLENCE IS EVER JUSTIFIED? DO YOU BELIEVE IN REVENGE?

No, there is absolutely no need for violence & all stupidity will carry on existing until people realize that is exactly what we are - human beings. Violence is something human beings have created & therefore as human beings we have a responsibility to put a stop to pain.

Success is the best revenge. I'd rather be able to forgive people for their wrong doings but sometimes that's too hard when something inside us tells us to push back at shit. It's an unfortunate situation which at sometime we're gonna have to learn to overcome. I'd rather be able to forgive than 'get revenge' but if there was no wrong how could there be forgiveness or revenge?

AND FINALLY: ANYTHING OF INTEREST TO ADD?

Nothing of interest really. The EP is now well & truly sold out, 12" out by the time you read this, T-shirts £3.25 (inc. P & P) from our address & the only thing to add is 1 plus 68 equals 69.

Peace & Love,
A.Y.S.

And so another interview draws to a close, I push my chair back and survey another result of many laboured hours of one fingered typing and frequent errors, and admit it was worth it.

A.Y.S. are, for those of you who are interested in such things: John: Vocals, Sean: Bass, Simon: Drums, and Tom Horror: Guitar. Their address is:

John, 50A Erith Rd, Belvedere, Kent, DA17 6EX.

Their phone number is: 03224 31184.

OK? Now go out and buy their records, play them and feel your brain exit out the back of your skull. Beautiful.

I stood upon the waters edge, the toes of my pumps projecting over the edge, my image reflected in the water, my blue eyes returning the curious gaze. A small brown fish scuttled past in the depths. I adjusted my gaze to follow its path only to find the floating ugliness of a beer can upon the water, looking further into the pond I spotted many more: Stella, Heineken, Carlsberg, Holsten Pils - their garish colours at odds with the dark browns and greens of the underwater vegetation. I slowly felt anger tinged with sadness creep across my features. How can people have so little respect or love of the earth to leave their garbage scattered over its surface, lying there wasted, unused, in many cases acting as a death trap for wildlife? Listen you stupid fuckers: pick up your litter, put it in a bin or take it home because it's that lack of respect for our earth that people practise when they destroy rainforests thus causing drought or when multinational murdering bastards poison our land with chemicals. THINK! You are the root of the problem. And the next person I see throw a beer can into that pond will follow it forthwith, now thats what I call direct action!

Mark...29/8/86.....

Chumbawamba

Chumbawamba are a group of people who live collectively in a large squatted house in Leeds. They are also a band. But first and foremost they're a group of dead nice people (spelt it right that time!) living their lives according to their own deeply held beliefs: Vegan, anarchist, feminist; all easy labels but these people live them...and that's important. It's because Chumbawamba (like Crass before them) are not part of the rock 'n' roll circus, are not rockstars, just people, that they are important. They also write incredible music that varies from harsh (but not thrashy) anarchopunk to more mellow (but no less hardhitting) melodic folk... Chumbawamba are sharp, bright, effective and thrilling... that's why on the 23rd of June 1986 I took the bus to their home in Armley, sat down in a room with a few of them and Robbie from A State of Mind from San Francisco USA who was over visiting and did the interview that follows shortly.

A State of Mind are also a great band and, if Robbie was anything to go by, a great bunch of people as well - their music is just as varied, powerful and effective as the Chumbas - in fact the nearest comparison I can conjure up is Chumbawamba with American accents, fine in my book...

The Interview;

Those that took part: Me.

: Robbie (A.S.O.M.).
: Boffo (Chumbas).
: Anne (").
: Dan (").
: Mave (").

(Lou & Daz took no part)

The tape player hisses and my horrible voice nervously speaks: ...Do you ever get sick of being interviewed by zines and answering the same old boring questions?

silence...someone says "Erm..."...more silence...then everyone laughs...

Anne: I think it depends on how predictable and boring questions are...

You mean like that one?

Boffo: No, that's not really a predictable question.

Robbie: No-one asks us that.

Anne: It's like talking to people; some people are more boring than others.

...silence and smiles...

Would you call yourselves a 'punk' band, where do you fit in the present day movement? Any opinions on the present situation?

Boffo: The punk movement is fairly awful, I think it's really dire. I don't know; I'd say we probably are a punk band.

Mave: I think it's changed a lot; the anarchopunk movement...I don't know, it seems to be a lot less going on, less bands...

Boffo: It's that old thing of what people think punk is, I mean if it's the music and the clothes then obviously we're not a punk band so if it's the way you think about things then we probably are. But that's not what most people think it is so...

How do you feel in relation to the people that go along to Adam & Eves (Leeds) so called punk/Alternative venue, every week or whatever?

Boffo: Probably alienated because like we refuse to play at Adam & Eves cos it's a really shit place...

Robbie: Why is it shit?

Boffo: Erm...because it's got heavy security, you get searched when you go in, it's expensive...it exists because breweries want to make a profit and that sort of thing...

Robbie: It seems like that then the punk thing to do would be to not play that...

Anne: I don't know how true this is cos I haven't thought about it all that much so I'm not trying to say that this's gospel but I feel like the situation in Britain's changed a lot, or maybe it's just my awareness of it, but punk hasn't adapted to that change, it's still sort of...a lot of it's still content to push the same sort of issues and the same sort of action that it were pushing before, and the same sort of stances and it's not really valid anymore...

Boffo: All that original thing all's been bought up anyway by the state...y'know punks on Coronation St. and Eastenders or whatever. And it's like unfortunate that people are still really into that sort of thing. Thing is, it's not like to say that the people who go to Adam & Eves are stupid or anything like that 'cos there's nowhere else for people to go and see bands. Like Nick Toczek would say oh well it's up to us if we think that Adam & Eves isn't good enough then it's up to us to create an alternative which we haven't done on that scale; a weekly club or whatever. So, y'know, we've no right to be slagging his club off, well...

Anne: But I don't feel the same way about music and things like that anymore anyway. I don't think creating a weekly club is as strong a political statement as getting involved in issues that are going on around Leeds. I think it's more valid to do that now, in a way, even though we're playing music that we hope will inspire people. I wouldn't feel that we were doing anything intensely political if we ran a club every week. I don't know what everyone else thinks about that. Depending on what sort of basis it were run on, I mean if we set up something that were like a collective that people actually got involved in and it worked on that level then I'd probably think that it were radical but not just creating an alternative to Adam & Eves; not taking it all the way.

What sort of people do you think you are getting through to? Who are you communicating to? Punks?

Dan: A lot of young people; young as in...

Boffo: Younger than Danbert Nobacon! (laughter) Now that covers a fairly wide spectrum! (laughter).

Dan: A lot of people who, I've said this before, who don't remember Crass. There's a lot of people coming, looking into music, and sort of haven't looked into it before...

Boffo: Not just punky types tho'...There's always like a broad spectrum of people that listen to protest music, there always has been. At the moment it's mainly punks because protest music is mainly loud and fast, but it isn't just those sort of people that want to listen to music that's actually trying to say something, I wouldn't have thought so anyway. (to Robbie) Y'know like your gigs, what's the people like that go? I mean ours are still like mainly punk gigs?

Robbie: No, not really. I would say that the punks don't come to see us; it's mostly an older crowd. When you look out there Y'know there's a lot of black clothes which is, no spikes and stuff like that; which is still very strong in America...

Boffo: Oh yeah, I mean we don't get like GBH fans coming to see us...

Mave:...but if they happen to be there some of them sometimes watch.

Anne: WE used to be, like, all black clothes anyway didn't we? We still get that sort of audience but we can still relate to them so I don't feel alienated from them.

You've often been compared to Crass in your music, life-styles, stagershow...So how do you feel about this? Is it a fair comparison?

Boffo: No I don't think the stagershow is anything like

A STATE OF MIND

Start Here Obstacle



stuff that's really easy to patronise or to look down on people even if you don't mean to. It's really easy and you can see how people get that opportunity to act a bit distant and to keep that air of superiority even if you don't want it, it's pathetic...

Do you feel there's any way of overcoming that though?

Anne: Being nice to people?

Boffo: Yeah, just by being really honest...Y'know people where you've actually been given the vibe that I'm a member of the audience and they're in a band and it's terrible; it's a really bad thing. I never want to be in that situation where I'm lordling it over someone just because I happen to be in a pop group whereas they don't because that's stupid.

Mave: It's just as easy not to get into that as it is to get into it.

Boffo: You've still got to make a choice over whether you want to do it or you don't...

Mave: But we still want flying V guitars! (laughter).

How would you feel if you were walking down the street and you saw someone walking along with 'Chumbawamba' sprayed on his or her jacket? Teeny bop question...

...mild laughter...someone says: "famous"...

Anne: I'd probably hide in case they recognise me...

Boffo: I mean it's happened actually...

Dan: Yeah, I can't remember what I felt...

Anne: (at the same time) It was Silentnight, silentnight picket line...

Boffo: I mean I can think of a few instances but I mean, I don't know. I think it's alright; I don't think it's bad that people have the names of bands on their jackets cos I wear badges with names of bands on. It's wrong to assume that everyone that's got the name of something on their jacket is some kind of slothoring fan or whatever.

Anne: Do you know what I feel, I think sometimes when I see people, like when I saw that lad on Silentnight, well I didn't mind him having name on at all but I were embarrassed in case he recognised me and he were embarrassed, do you know what I mean?

Well I'm going to go out and spray Chumbawamba on my combat jacket now...

Robbie: Now he's got the ok! (laughs).

Boffo: We saw someone on television about three weeks ago who had a Chumba's type symbol thing...that stone-henge thing...I felt really good!

Anne: I went to a disco a fortnight ago in Burnley and they played "Revolution" and I were dead embarrassed then!

Boffo: No-one danced!

Anne: ~~Im a waz~~(woops!) Well they did but they were with me (laughs), and I really wanted to dance but I didn't dare 'cos I thought 'oh I like this record more than any other' (general laughter) but I didn't dare in case people thought, in case anyone knew me and thought that I were trying to say this is mine (laughter).

What's your opinion on drugs: alcohol, tobacco, even tea?

Do you think they have any justification?

Boffo: I think we've all got different views on drugs actually. I think we all take it to different extents as well cos...

Anne: Smoker (referring to herself).

Boffo: cos I personally don't think it is justifiable for me to smoke or drink tea, coffee or coca cola anymore, Y'know anything like that but other people justify it and it's not like as if we have arguments about tea.

Anne: In a way I don't think that it is morally justifiable and I know options especially since I'm hypocritical here since I give up tea and coffee everyso often, we don't get nasty brands of tea and coffee and stuff here but if I go out to somebodies house or to a cafe then I'll just get whatever they have there. Because I actually think about that yet I still keep on smoking tobacco because I'm addicted to it...seems like a load of hypocrisy. I can't justify it but I do it...what can I say, I haven't got a straight cut answer.

Do you think alcohol and to a small extent cannabis are justified in their use as social relaxants so people are more at ease with each other and able to communicate?

Boffo: It's a really hard question to answer cos every person, whoever you talk to, has different ways of justifying things so everyone in this room will justify....

Crass at all I must admit...

Well I've heard people compare the two even if it's only in the effect.

Boffo: Yeah that's weird because a large amount of the reason why we do the stagershow is because we're realising that it's different from all this punky Crassy type stuff that has happened which has always been really one dimensional; loads and loads of shouting and sort of giving off this powerful thing. I think we're totally different to that. The fast bits of the records might be but I think the slow bits of the records are like erm...Joan (tho' it might have been John) Biers or something. I mean people don't say we're a Joan (?) Biers rip-off because people don't know Joan (?) Biers...

I certainly don't!

...but people know what Crass sound like because they think 'Oh yeah, it's singing about anarchy or whatever, it must be like Crass' even though we do a lot of sort of slow, more folky stuff which Crass have never ever done. But I mean people sort of ignore that because it's convenient to give everyone a label.

Beyond the music tho', do you think say a comparison with Crass is in your beliefs, your lifestyle...

Mave: I think it's inevitable really when you're taking on something like...I mean I obviously we sympathise with the same things...

Anne: But in another way it's strange because if somebody were in Labour party they wouldn't say you're like Neil Kinnock. A lot of people live collectively. I have got a lot of respect for Crass but because we're a band and we live collectively and they're in a band and they live collectively people compare us instantly...I'd say that's the biggest similarity between us...

Have you ever had much contact with Crass except, obviously the Bullshit Detector stuff?

Boffo: Not at all. We've never been to their house or anything like that. Again we made a conscious decision not to...As individuals we've thought it's not on going down to see how Crass live and how Crass are doing this and that because we wanna do stuff for ourself instead of just thinking this is how they do it. Initially, obviously, we thought it's great that Crass all live together, that they live in this house in the country and stuff. But I think once we'd got that image fixed then everything else which is real and which isn't an image we got off somebody else doing it is totally separate from how Crass do whatever they do. Also I think we're one of the few bands that are involved in the anarchopunk thing that haven't sort of been down to see Crass and get a few ideas off them and sort of try and get a record out on Crass records and all that sort of thing. Everyone else, even all the bands from northern England, they all end up going down to London to put records out via Crass or Corpus Christi or something.

As a group of people do you think you're more approachable than say Crass, Poisons, Flux were? I mean I always found groups like them extremely hard to approach, they always had this impenetrable mystique about them...

Anne: What do you think cos you're...

I think you're lot more approachable personally but I also want to know what you think about it- are you heading in the direction of that mystique?

Anne: We don't want to obviously.

Boffo: No, I don't think we are. I think we're dead opposite.

Robbie: Since I'm looking as from an outsiders view and I've met Crass and Flux and I met a couple of people out of Chumba's two years ago; I think they're, I mean this is in no way putting down Crass and Flux because they're all great people also, but I think Chumba folk are a lot down to earth whatever; a lot more easier to relate to and talk to, maybe of closer age or whatever...

Boffo: (laughing) ...Crass are old fogies... (laughter) I think we've always streeed that we don't want to be approached as a band, and that we're not actually a band first and foremost. Obviously we're all into the band and think it's really important but everything's really individual and stuff. It's obvious once you get to a point where you're selling records and where people are writing to you and people are going to your gigs and

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...different things. I don't want to smoke cannabis but there's no moral justification for other people not to smoke it at all.

Anne: As well like, I think it depends on extreme. I've seen people that are permanently stoned through smoking cannabis and I think that's a shame and a bit stupid really and the same with alcohol, depends how you go about it whether or not it's justified as a social relaxant, I mean if it's a prop, like fags are a prop for me, then I think there's something wrong.

Boffo: What do you think? Me? Yeah, I mean do you drink and stuff?

Well I drink and I have smoked cannabis, not something I do regularly...

Boffo: Why? Because you don't think it's... Quite honestly because I don't want to get too heavily into anything like that... I try not to overdrink but...

But... (laughter) I think I'll leave it at that!

Boffo: You sound like Robbie.

Robbie (indignantly): Hey!

Anne: Admit it, you've just dried out haven't you? (laughter).

Robbie: It's just the potential they have to kill you; to kill your brain, to make you stop being able to think so many people have got wrapped in that through drugs and alcohol, not through drinking tea or coffee... Alcohol and drugs are really scary for me...

Dan: Prescribed drugs as well...

Boffo: This country in particular, I don't know about America, is run on a state rule which relies on people being relaxed, content and basically doped up so a lot of kinds of drugs are tolerated to a certain extent anywhere up to a point where they keep you unthinking about things...

Robbie: Passive.

Boffo: This whole heroin thing, like government has this massive campaign about heroin because heroin isn't paying money towards government but like cigarettes kill so many many millions more people than heroin kills and so does alcohol but there's no big campaign against alcohol because it's something that keeps the mass of population totally subdued whilst pouring money into the government so it's well tolerated.

How do you feel about direct action? Do you support the actions of the ALP? How about the animal rights militia, hunt redistribution squad... is violence against human beings for these causes justified?

Anne (chidingly): One at a time!

Boffo (to Robbie): What were you saying about it earlier? Robbie: Yeah, it seemed where I was coming from, with it I think it's alright and I support it and all, but when it gets to the point of being the only channel of doing something and just doing it for the sake of doing it... OK, let me give you an example, such as just going around continuously smashing windows of whatever it might be: Colonel Sanders or y'know bank of America, which I guess is compared to your Barclays, and people just doing that constantly and then going home and making it out to be something like 'oh, it was great.' and blowing it totally out of proportion instead of saying 'OK, we are doing this' and giving a reason for doing it even to the bank or Colonel Sanders... What I'm saying is that direct action is one way of accomplishing what we're

trying to accomplish but it cannot be the only way. It doesn't seem like it should totally engulf our movement which it seems like it's doing. I think Chumbas has a very good saying and it's like 'the real revolution starts within' also not only outside. We can't forget about our own heads which are really fucked up, just as fucked up as what's going on out there...

Anne: One feels the other in a way. I think you can't change yourself in isolation by locking yourself up and refusing to participate in breaking down the shit outside but on the other hand you can't just concentrate on the shit outside as a diversion from your own problems.

Anne: It works on different levels as well, for some people it's what they want to do, if they think that smashing windows is what they want to do then that's great but for some people it's just not how they want to go about it which doesn't mean to say that they're not as much a part of what's happening as the other. A lot of it comes down on the individual.

Anne: Quite often when I read what people have done I think 'yeah great' and occasionally I'll read something and think... I don't read the Mars Bar scare and think 'you bastards' like a lot of people do but on the other hand I think a lot of the actions are bad moves because they're propaganda exercises and as propaganda they don't work...

How about the Animal Rights militia and their warning bombs on scientists cars and the more recent, defused major bomb in London which was designed to kill people?

Boffo: I haven't got an inbuilt reaction against killing people per se because I can think of a lot of people who if they got killed I'd cheer. I'm not being really ruthless about this it's just that in South Africa there's certain people, if the blacks are going to have a revolution then they're going to have to kill people... and even with Animal Rights and stuff but as soon as it gets to killing people it's wrong, I don't think that but I do think this thing about blowing up vivisectionists...

Anne: It's a question of priorities as well if you're going to blow somebody up... I mean to kill a bloke to save an animal is in my mind wrong...

Boffo: There's a lot more people you can blow up than vivisectionists...

Anne: ...but if, really obvious example, Norman Tebbit. If he'd died in Brighton bomb I wouldn't shed any tears. I think there's different priorities—it just seems strange that animals are put above people like even people that have mistreated or mistreated animals.

Boffo: I don't think anything that the Hunt Redistribution Squad or the Animal Rights Militia have done is actually intended to hurt people, I'm sure of it. If I actually wanted to kill a vivisectionist then I could go to Leeds University tomorrow and kill a vivisectionist and find it as easy as signing on or whatever... The idea of planting a bomb is to create scare tactics, if you're actually killing people... I don't think terrorism like that works cos it's such bad publicity. All these defused bombs; they're all warned so that someone can get there and defuse them and this thing about Mars Bars; none of them were actually poisoned. The thing about the Mars Bars was that there was this massive scare about Mars Bars and people

thinking about these cranks but Mars stopped funding E Cuzs hospital because it was such bad publicity...

Anne: They lost a tremendous amount of profit.

Boffo: ...but that wasn't on front page of the papers... Anne: Anyway the media and the police could distort a note in a milk bottle into a petrol bomb if they wanted to.

Boffo: ...same with the hunt redistribution squad; the photograph of them with chainsaws and pickaxe handles and all the threats and when it came down to it they dug up that grave which I thought was a good laugh, very funny...

Anne: I hate the image, like SAS commanders...

Boffo: It did look really stupid... a lot of people are obviously really playing at it...

Robbie: I could understand their idle threats because where else are we going to go? There's been numbers of break-ins and different things; what else are we going to do to get what they're doing stopped? So it's bully tactics, so you make threats but if it works, it works.

Boffo: It works both ways... terrorism works in that it drags the whole issue out into the open and it pulls the movement across a bit... It's only since the ALP started that the animal rights movement has moved over to being direct and an activist movement, before that it was all RSCA and BUAV who weren't really doing anything then... but on the other hand it can be used as really bad publicity. The state probably invents half the death threats that wizz around anyway, somebody invented the one at Leeds university I'm sure...

Robbie: But they do that with any action against them whether it's militant or even if it's a peaceful protest, they always change it around to make it look like something it's not so that can't deter you.

What got you interested in veganism in the first place? how do you feel about being so?

Anne: It's become a habit to me.

Dan: Initially we went through a phase where we were absolutely strict but once you sort of accept it you just get relaxed about it...

Anne: Mellow out...

Anne: You become much more tolerant I suppose, it's not something you think about; it's like being white, it's something that you are.

Boffo: There are also more important things than veganism in terms of what you eat; like you can look at food on a plate and think right has it got animal content, check it all. Is it from South Africa, no I'll eat it but there's a lot more to it than that. Like me and Robbie were in a cafe the other day and you ordered something that came with milk in it and the option was either you drink it or it gets chucked away, and it's stupid. Waste is causing more deaths in the 3rd world than eating animal produce...

Anne: Oh, you're making me feel a bastard because I sent a cup of tea back today because it had milk in it (laughter)... I just don't like it anymore...

That reminds me of the Buddhist monks thing whereby even though they're vegetarians they'll accept gifts of meat and eat it...

Boffo: I don't think I'd eat meat I must admit cos I don't think I could stomach it but I do make exceptions

to wastage and to things that are really oppressive to people...

Anna: This is down to earth but not moral ground! Like when you go to somebody's house and you say you're a vegan before you go and they say they'll cook you a meal and they've tried really hard but they don't really know what veganism is... it's not so much a case of waste, if you said chuck it away, I don't want it you're going to hurt them more than if you just ate it...
Beffo: It's not just hurting people; to me that's not as important as the fact you're going to give them a distorted impression of why you're doing something... as soon as someone thinks you are a fanatic and not prepared to give and take then they'll just never give veganism a second glance again... as soon as you adopt veganism you either adopt it as a pattern which is just there, from day to day...
Dan: Finds its own level.

Beffo: ...or you say I'm a vegan therefore I don't eat this and this and it's a rule and as soon as it becomes a rule you're in the shit... the entire problem with humankind is limiting themselves... people that are more concerned about limiting themselves, even if it's in the food that they eat, than actually having an open mind about everything single situation they might meet have problems...

What originally got you interested in veganism?

Anna: Tony was a vegan...

Beffo: The first vegan we ever knew was like, he looks like death warmed up and we were just really wary...

Anna: Worst advert for veganism you've ever seen in your life!

Beffo: ...and we were all considering whether to become vegan or not. We thought it was a really good idea but we didn't know if it was healthy or not because...

Dan: We didn't know much about it.

Beffo: ...and we thought 'oh shit, you've gotta have milk and cheese or else you die' and anyway he was sitting in this chair in our room and I said how do you feel about veganism then, do you think it's healthy? and he sat there like this (upon which Beffo slid down into a hunched position and said in an infirm voice:) "Well, I've been a vegan for years and look at me" (laughter) and we thought 'oh shit'... it was really funny!

Anna: We didn't all turn together, it was a slow one at a time.

Dan: We don't really think much about it now cos we're all in the same house... it's it, it (Beffo takes the micky mimicking Dan) it's a political thing to be a vegan really... There were one on Crossroads about a month ago...

Anna: Old crank ego! (huh?!!?)

Dan: ...he was just a total ~~crank~~ stereotype crank and it was terrible really, he was into organic body-misc absolutely everything...

Robbie: It's still really rare in the states, it's a very small vegan movement. It's really tough; you like have so many non-animal tested products and like that yeast extract B12 stuff that you make tea with. If you're a vegan in the states you have a really good

chance of having a lack of B12 because there's no products sold just as B12. Everything seems to start here & move on over there...

Anna: But it's being bought up by multinationals; veganism and vegetarianism and sold back to us, it's becoming a product.

Beffo: It's really interesting seeing how big business is taking over.

Mave: Doesn't one of the big multinationals make veggie burgers?

Anna: Multinationals have a health food chain. (Holland and Barrett I think-Ed.)

Beffo: Realist is owned by a millionaire meat eater and they're the biggest vegetable burger company in Britain. Anna: They're shit anyway.

I like them. (occasionally)

Beffo: They're alright if you nick them!

Robbie: Which means in a matter of maybe 10 years when all this vegan stuff is multinational we may be reverting back to...

Beffo: ...eating meat as a political gesture... cos if veganism did get bought up even though fewer animals would be dying the world situation would be exactly the world situation would be exactly the same, people would suffer more. If they take on one bit somebody else suffers unless this whole thing goes at once. Which is why it's sad in a way that people are so much into animal rights... people are so bothered about cattle being eaten ground in slaughterhouses and yet no-one seems that aware that people in Brazil are being eaten ground in tortura prisons...

Robbie: ...and we're not really being much help; this last three questions or something have been on animal rights context...

Beffo: Yeah but it's good; we've been putting it in a context...

Robbie: ...but we in a State of Mind just got to this point of not answering vegetarian questions anymore just because it was this new thing hitting the states & it just seemed that there were so many other important things to be talked about...

Beffo: This month's vegan magazine had a letter from someone saying: 'Dear Vegan magazine, I object to the fact that the vegan magazine is running advertisements about homosexuality because we don't want to give this public the impression that we're cranks. Why don't we just stick to veganism...' and I thought well I'd rather live with a homosexual who eats hundreds of tons of meat a week than with a vegan who thinks homosexuality is some kind of perverse thing... silence...

Anna: Give us another! (laughter).

Well I suppose this relates to that last bit in some way - Do you believe in free love? How do you feel about promiscuity? (and in case anyone wonders this link is sexual, I'm not saying anything that's anti-gay, right?)

(-lots of hums)-

Anna: I think it depends how both people feel about it, it's a really funny question... if you want to have sex with somebody and they want to have sex with you and you both like it what's wrong with it? I think it can be quite an upsetting thing in personal terms ~~because~~ if it's not meeting your emotional needs or whatever but you can't comment on other people's sex lives... are you asking us about our sex lives? (laughter)

(extremely embarrassed) Not really, no I was but if you feel like talking about it I don't mind... No I wasn't...

Anna: I mean I'm not getting at you...
Just your own personal attitudes, that's all cos I've got reasonably strong opinions on it but...

Anna: Give us your opinions... (I start um and arring)
...I think sex, in a way, is a time when you can be really close to someone but, on the other hand, it's not always like that but sometimes it's like a really strong highly charged, truthful encounter...

I personally would believe in free love if human beings were not jealous creatures but they are and that's why I don't believe in it cos I think it causes too much friction...

Anna: Yeah, I think that's true...

...and it's just something I choose to avoid doing.

Mave: I agree.
Beffo: I personally think that a couple relationship is fine for me but that's not to say... it's like you saying people are jealous so you choose not to do this but some people choose to live in situations aren't just couple or single or whatever, some people choose to belong to different kinds of relationships.

I'm not passing judgement on them or anything...

Beffo: It's really hard cos all I can personally say is what I'm into for me, I don't really care what other people are into. I accept that other people do loads of wild crazy things.

Anna: I think free love or whatever, it doesn't work in a lot of cases, it's not rewarding but it's same with all forms of relationship...

Beffo: ...but it is for some people. It's one of those things, there's no rules about it at all, you can't do.

Robbie: Is free love fucking around with anyone or is it like Anna said, having an encounter with someone that you're really attracted to?

If it's got a deeper meaning to it then I would call it free love but quite a lot of what I saw as being described as free love by many people just seemed to me to be as you put it, fucking around; more free sex than free love...

Beffo: But there's nothing really wrong with fucking around, I mean if people want to fuck each other and they make that choice whether they love each other or not, then they're making a choice irrelevant of what's happening outside of that relationship; if they want to fuck each other that's fine.

Robbie: Well a highly charged relationship doesn't necessarily mean that there's love either, just means that there's some kind of bond, something chemical happening.

Beffo: Just having sex with other people in itself is fine, it's still a choice, there's nothing actually wrong with people sleeping around with millions of people...

Robbie: There's getting to be problems with that now, all sorts of social diseases getting transmitted because people aren't being...

Anna: Careful.

Robbie: ...and truthful and honest with their partners.

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There's always been a pattern of struggle and defeat:

Also it seemed to me that people were basically using each other, even if at the same time...

Anne: But you can't love everybody you have sex with. I've been in love twice in my life, would have had sex twice, you can't, I can't I'm saying, not that I'm advocating grappling around with anybody but in some ways there's different ways of using each other. If you're using each other & you like each other & you get on & enjoy each other's company well what's wrong with that? Robbie: Then it doesn't seem like you'd be using... Boffo: It's a really muddy area to talk about... I've just been reading this stuff by the pleasure tendency, they've just done this booklet and the sedition about sex, not about love, just as sex as an act, is brilliant because it just stated it to be the ultimate communication between people. In itself, devoid of everything else, it's a really pure thing.

X Anne: You can love somebody anyway without being ... I agree with that...

Boffo (smiling and holding legs together): I'm feeling really horny now! (laughter).

I suppose that sort of leads onto sexism... What does it mean to you, how do you feel it affects you personally?

Boffo: I think it's fair enough that women are subservient to men because like... I can't carry this on! (grins)

Anne: Untie me Boff! (laughter). If you think, the way that it affects you emotionally; it sort of gives me personally a lack of confidence in certain things or makes me believe that I've got a lack of aptitude for certain things but the way that it affects me when it's sort of exterior... There's actual things like I'm frightened to go out at night, that it's not safe for me to sleep in house on me own, that when I'm outside people won't judge me for what I am or what I say but for their conceptions of women. It's so obvious...

Then into a talk on how men are physically stronger than women...

Boffo: ...everything that we do is geared towards men doing it and everything that women are naturally really good at are things aren't recognised as being of any importance...

Back onto Anne: ...sometimes I think it fills me full of hate and I know that it's unhealthy and that it's not really going to change things going round hating men, I mean specific men I suppose that I feel threatened by or who I believe are perpetrating crimes against women...

Mave: I think if men are better than women at football or weightlifting it seems pathetic to use that as an excuse to abuse women for other things.

Anne: I think it makes me and a lot of other women feel like you have to justify yourself all the time, you have to prove that you're at least on a level instead of just being able to communicate with people. It's a battle, it's like a battle of strength. It's to show that you're just as clever, just as sharp, just as aware and it's a really stupid setup but in some ways there's no way of getting out because you know people are going to treat you certain way and you've got to challenge that all the time and you can't relax and be yourself because instead you're having to force the issues all the time just to be taken seriously or accepted as an equal.

Boffo: The image of men is as ridiculously stupid as the image of women; all this thing about blokes being soldiers and being good at football and like Jimmy Hill on television during world cup saying football isn't a women's game as if that meant if you're good at football you're better than women. It's so crap and it's real insulting to men as much as it's insulting to women. I personally don't give a shit if I can play football and Anne can't, it's stupid. I suppose the difference is that Anne probably could give a shit because it's all that way, like saying if she can't do it then she better feel sorry for herself whereas I don't have to defend myself...

Anne: I think there's a basic lack of confidence instilled in you, you'll probably disagree with me cos it seems like I've got loads of confidence but I haven't in

Colonel Tom Parker admires a good

Packaged and marketed we become the loads of ways because I know that lots of times I want to stand up and say 'I can do this' but I'm scared to do it just in case I do it and it's slightly off and everybody's expectations. I don't see much being in this house but in outside world but a lack of confidence about what you are in this world, how much space that you're allowed. I consciously started thinking when I were walking about 'this is my space and you're not fucking having it'; maybe that seems aggressive or like it's some sort of war of the sexes but I've found you have to do that. You have to be aware that if you're not strong somebody's going to walk over you and that's not a general statement on human nature, that's the way that men and women are set up. Just sitting in a pub, all the time you've got to be aware that if you're not strong and if you're not willing to defend your own space you are going to get some bloke invading it.

Robbie: I think that goes for both sexes though, I mean I know I feel that way.

Anne: I think you can be made to feel really powerless as well and because you're made to feel powerless you can be made to feel like you're nothing. That's happened to me, incidents where I've had all sort of power taken away completely and afterwards you question what you are, you think you're worthless because you haven't even got the power to control your own body or control what somebody does to it or how somebody reacts to you. It's almost like you don't have a right to be in world... it destroys any belief in yourself and I think a lot of women have been through that.

Well I've my belief in myself destroyed in tutorials or lessons or whatever, school...

Anne: But I think it's a different matter of somebody physically taking your body over.

Boffo: It's interesting as well how if you're a bloke and you do something that isn't living up to that male image you get a lot more respect from women... I think women instinctively recognise that men who aren't being macho aren't sort of weedy pansies but they're actually a bit more sensitive and that's something that's good...

Anne: I think your example of a tutorial, in a way I don't think you've got any comprehension, I'm sorry for attacking you, of what it's like because after the tutorial you're not going to go away feeling guilty and worthless because the bloke shouted at you, because you're a shit... I'm not meaning to get really defensive or anything but I think there is a basic lack of men understanding how it feels to be totally powerless because they are never totally powerless...

Robbie: I wanna know where we go with sexism, I mean there's so much difference between the sexes but we're trying to get over those differences but I don't know if any of us really knows how or if we're capable of it yet - it's really an awkward situation we're in.

Boffo: I think you have to feel that you can be capable of it to get anywhere cos you're capable of it in certain situations.

Robbie: Yeah, like in this room.

Boffo: Like yeah maybe in this room. I suppose what you've got to do is make those situations happen more often.

Anne: I think there is a way of getting over it and that's like trust and that don't come cos people say 'oh I'm an antisexist man and I'm an antisexist woman and we'll get together', it's because you meet and get on as people and you learn to trust that personality & cos you know that blokes nice and you know that he cares and OK he's not perfect and he may be sexist but in some ways I'm sexist and I can't rule out... It's easy to say I've been taught these things but they don't matter anymore because I know about them because they become ingrained in your personality to a large extent and they're almost involuntary. If I trust you and like you trust me or I trust Mave and Mave trusts me then knowing each other after a while you're not men and women anymore in the same way; there's not that battle it's just me talking to Mave and Mave talking to me and... I'm going round and round...

Boffo: It's like talk about sexism, the thing that crossed my mind is that when I first got into the idea of being a non sexist man I thought: 'right I'm a non-sexist man and I refuse to be part of that whole

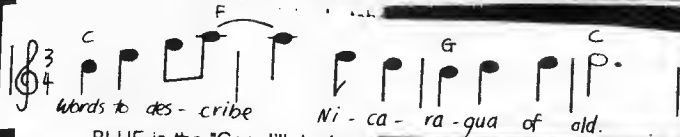
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pornographic thing of seeing women in terms of their bodies and their parts' and all that sort of stuff. And if I saw a woman walking down the street in front of me (and I thought 'oh, she's got a nice bum' or whatever then I'd think 'No, no, no, that's stupid, that's sexist stop thinking that sort of thing' which I've now realised is stupid because knowing what feminist literature is like and knowing how, what I assumed to be hardline feminists just cos it used to really shock me how right on women would talk in terms of like 'Oh I'm going to pick up that other woman tonight', whereas I thought if I said that then I'd be being really sexist but you're not always being really sexist by thinking that, you've gotta liberate something which is far deeper than that. It's OK if I say that I think Anne's body is really nice but people might just think I'm being really sexist which is stupid.

Robbie: It's gotten perverted to be that people are scared of the human body now so you can't look at nothing; 'Oh my god!' y'know, it shouldn't be that way... They seem to be confusing sexual with sexist.

Boffo: Yeah & it's like the whole thing about pornography...

That's the ultimate perversion of sexual and sexist...

Boffo: It is but the idea of presenting images of nudes bodies to look at, if it's stripped of the whole fact that it's aimed at men, it's aimed at oppressing women, it's aimed at achieving certain stereotypes of women, yeah & it's to do with money and all that sort of thing, than actually looking at a picture of somebody else with no clothes on; there's nothing with that because the human body is a great thing & you look at it and you can get turned on by it and think 'great I'm turned on by that' and there's nowt wrong with that But there is if it means that, what it means now which is that you look at it and you think 'I'm turned on by that' and it gives you a feeling of power...then you're fucked and that's why pornography is bad...

Anne: I think it's bad, have you talked about this while I've been out? (forget to tell you, Anne had to answer the telephone).

Boffo: A little bit.

Anne: Because it gives you a strange sort of expectancy about your own sexuality that can never be fulfilled, do you know what I mean? And also it's like when you start to equate excitement with guilt. Even though it's valid as excitement it's not, it's like a warped emotion in a way and you're never going to find out what really turns you on or what it's really like to touch somebody without having guilt on your back all the time.

Boffo: ...or without thinking that you're actually doing it because you're like controlling situation, that you are like having power by calling all the shots when you're involved in a relationship with someone...

Anne: Sss I don't think it's just men that read pornography, I mean I used to babysit and read pornography, I mean I learnt about sex through reading pornographic magazines...

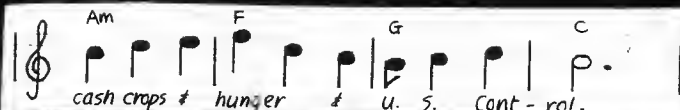
Boffo: That sounded funny: 'I used to babysit and read pornography'...sounds like two perversions or something (laughter).

Anne: Y'know what I mean! You go to somebody's house, you're babysitting and you look under cushions and you find Mayfair... (in a hushed tone) I had some really strange ideas about sex...

Boffo: Yeah, and another thing about pornography is that it is as offensive to men as it is to women in some ways in that it gives you the impression that you do have a lot of power; it gives you the impression that you be like this bloke which is in all these magazines who is all conquering, who is...

Who's whole purpose in life is to fuck.

Boffo: That's it, and you think 'yeah that's what I've gotta be like' and that really screws people up especially since a lot of it is...I could understand it if it was just recounting what happens in life, I could understand it but I'm not saying I condone it. If it were just telling the story of about this happened and this bloke had power over this woman, but it doesn't, it actually tells lies about what men do or what women like which really distorts it.



Robbie: It's a big fairytale.

Boffo: Yeah, there's certain things about sex that I thought I knew all about from reading pornography when I was that young which were just absolute crap.

Mave: I mean there's sort of like what's supposed to be shape of man & woman, I mean how many percent of population of world, country or whatever actually come up to that shape? I mean we're made to feel freaks because...I'm tall and thin and that not how a man should look to them but they're sort of freaks really cos they're minority, it's just really strange.

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Anne: I think as well with women it's all women's sexuality through eyes of men so you get a really strange idea of your own sexuality because it's always in relation to what turns men on, to what men like, to what men expect and it's never ever from a woman's point of view, or if it is it's written, and all the poses are still aimed at men. Even the women aren't real women...

Boffo: But it's a lie anyway because it's not actually what men like anyway because the whole thing is that women have big breasts and if they don't have big breasts then they're out, they're no use.

Anne: Oh no, they have pert ones!

Boffo: Oh yeah, that's it!

What the hell does that mean?

Boffo: Pert...(laughs).

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Anne: Small and chirpy! (someone has quiet hysterics in the background)...Even things like lesbianism are all shown from angles that are meant to appeal to men, that have nothing to do with women y'know they're all sort of poses of degradation or...substitute men, do y'know what I mean?

...I think it's really dangerous, not because of the old it exploits women, just because it teaches us to think in such strange ways. If I look at a piece of pornography the first thing that hits me isn't 'this woman is being exploited, I am angry', I mean I don't cos I haven't looked at pornography for a long time, but just the overall impression of sex for both men & women, it's like looking at an advertisement; I know what's wrong with it, I know that it exploits women but it's not that that makes me angry because it's like seeing Vietnam too often, you have a cutoff switch, you become blasé to it, you know what it's all about but...it's the way that it affects your emotions, the way that it creates false excitement.

Boffo: And the fact that it's a lie.

Robbie: Perverts reality.

Boffo: I mean like Danbert's big thing...his big thing! (laughter, Boffo controls himself): Danbert's thing about, he does this thing about penis power and you're taught you have to have a big dick and all this sort of stuff. I mean I never used to think about that, you don't think about it, you just accept that that is the case: all the jokes about whether people have smaller than average size penis or whatever is, just really distorts everything you think about life and your relationship with women and everything...

(hmm...I've certainly had trouble over that-I used to be really hung up over that...first bit of that sounded like a gross understatement of the damage such bullshit does; it's done a damn good job of screwing me up-the Ed.)

Anne: Can I just blow a myth, I never ever met a woman that says the bigger the better.

Well do you want another question? (yeahs) What are your opinions on religion, do you have any religious/spiritual beliefs?

Mave: I haven't, none at all really...

Boffo: I've been through organised religion for 2/3rds of my life cos like all my family are really strict Mormons and I was brought up until I was about 17 or whatever as a Mormon; going to church every Sunday and all the stuff and I've absolutely no belief in it now...

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Taking it to the spiritual, do you believe in anything beyond the basic physical existence?

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Anne: I don't know.

Dan: I think I just sort of have faith in the fact that you can find something positive, that's all I can say about it really. Otherwise I think, y'know if you get depressed and that and everyone does there seems nothing

It's easier to waste energy doing nothing sat in front of television... And meanwhile, we sit eyes-glued and watching Princess on her cross-exchange tour of the USA, imagining it to be the instrument of dynasty. And what's the difference, I ask.



there but just the hope of whatever is enough to keep you going. I can't define it, it's just a positive feeling.

Dan: Which ~~name~~ ~~name~~ makes me think it's worthwhile...

The tape ends, I put a new one in, and a...
Dan: ...you just take the bits of various things, I mean I don't know much about buddhism anyway but I don't think it can possibly relate to every situation you're going to meet and I don't think you can ~~with~~ deal with it, but a bit of it you might think 'yeah'...

Boffo: I know what you mean - just from reading stuff that has been written by the old chinese philosophers & all the Zen stuff, I think some of it's brilliant stuff to read and it can be really inspiring but... a lot of people do think 'right, I'm into that' like people listen to UK Subs and think 'yeah I'm into punk, and that's punk, & I refuse to have anything to do with anything else'... y'know I used to say to my dad 'I'll never listen to that shit you listen to' because I was me & you're really dogmatic about it and I think people use spirituality in the same way, and religion.

Anne: But I think there's different forms of... y'see I would have probably said that most people in this room have a sense of spirituality about them, not because they're like dreamy or cosmic or anything like that but because they care & are aware about things that affect them personally & I'd look at that as spirituality.

Boffo: Do you not think that's reality though as opposed to spirituality?

Anne: Well maybe, y'know maybe you can't separate it because... I don't believe in a soul as an entity or whatever but I think basic goodness and caring is a form of spirituality & if that's reality as well... I don't think that good exists as an entity but I think it generates more good and I think it is an energy force...

I sound like a really cosmic woman here!

Boffo: I think that's true, yeah.

I burble a bit about empathy and oneness...

Boffo: That idea is, I mean like all the thing about the North American Indians, it seems like that they had a really deep spirituality which was oneness with the earth & with the elements & the way things worked... I don't know, I've never sort of thought I'm so into the earth I'll say a prayer to the sun tonight but I can understand...

Anne: But your form of prayer you don't even know that it's a prayer... looking out of kitchen window and you see the sky and it's purple and you just think 'that's beautiful but you don't actually say it out loud cos somebody'll think you're stupid'...

Boffo: No, you do say it out loud but you don't say 'Praise thee the purple sky!' (laughter).

Anne: ...and just the fact that you appreciate it is a form of prayer not prayer in the orthodox I'm going to get down on my knees and do it but you're still responding to it and giving it the praise it deserves. When I'm upset sometimes if I go for a walk & I go to this park & it's really nice, just the fact that it's calm has an effect on me.

I feel that feeling off trees.

Chumbawamba

Anne: North American Indians could only hug trees five minutes at a time because the vibes were too powerful sometimes. You gotta treehug as part of your training as a brave.

Robbie: That's great, that's just incredible...
Boffo: This really good innit? There's a lot more trees that I'd rather hug than a lot of people I can think of as well (laughter).

The zines changing its name to Believe in the Trees after the next one... (not any more it isn't it?)
Robbie: Why don't you change it...
Anne: ...to hug the Trees?

No, I think that's going a bit far!

Anne: Aye, you're scared of coming across a cissy! (laughter)... you didn't dare ask us what do you think of witchcraft did you? (laughter)...

I make this the seventh page of Chumbawamba so I've selected a few choice comments, take it away Anne!

...Sometimes I think there are hidden depths that we just don't know about, I don't know if witchcraft's right way, that things like that can tap. But I don't think that that's a question of rituals and going out & chanting strange incantations... I think it's just a question of learning to harness energy and becoming more aware of what the rest of the earth is doing... I think because we've learned what we can't touch, what's not concrete, we've learned to draw back and be scared of, then we can never experience it without damaging it... I think there's a breed of feminist witches coming up that are interested in things like circle dancing, they're for making people feel good... feminist consciousness rising through witchcraft or whatever... if these things make you feel good well what's wrong with them? The stuff about now isn't about calling up the devil or having power, it's about dancing and touching other people and looking inside yourself...

I should perhaps point out that the others said lots on this subject as well...

...Lou then came in and announced that tea was ready & off we all trooped for a really delicious vegan mousaka (is that how you spell it?)...

I found doing this interview one of the most inspiring thought provoking and enjoyable things that I have done for many a year. That night I went home to my flat happy and alive with new thoughts and a sense of realisation I didn't hold before... shit this is hard to express...

I felt cleansed, renewed, full of hope for the future, certain for once of my own ability to live on to achieve something of worth... yeah ~~life~~ life has so much to offer and we can do anything. I want to try. Are you willing to help?

Chumbawamba inspire us. They also make me cry because their music and it's words make me realise how much is wrong, how much needs to be achieved and how every day, in all our lives we prevent it being so... I know longer feel hopeless, these people have given me hope...

I don't want to put Chumbawamba on a pedestal but maybe I already have but their lifestyle is the closest I have yet found to my ideal... they inspire me on all levels, maybe that's because they're not a band, more a group of people playing music...

Thankyou to Chumbas and Robbie for allowing me to share their time and for making me feel so welcome in their home...

...Chumbawamba have a 7" 'Revolution' and an LP soon to be, A State of Mind have a 7" EP 'What's the difference...?'. Both share a 7" EP 'We are the World?' but you all knew that anyway...

Communicate
Chumbawamba, c/o Box 4, 59 Cookridge street, Leeds 2, W. Yorks, UK.
A State of Mind, PO Box 421304, San Francisco, Ca. 94142, USA.

The trouble with this medium is that it/I can never express the reality of this interview, how it felt, the quiet peace, the humour, the people... this only hints at it all... maybe it works, maybe it doesn't... this is no substitute for real human contact.....



If our music makes you happy, but content, it has failed. If our music entertains, but doesn't inspire, it has failed. The world's not a threat. Action that music inspires can be a threat.

Revolution

LP is out and if you as you should know by now the LP is out and if you haven't heard it: DO SO! NOW! Cos it's just incredible!

SHOP ASSISTANTS

I was going to write a very vicious put down of the Shop Assistants...but I haven't...

Why? Well they signed to Chrysalis, they play gigs for extortionate prices...

BUT: The Shop Assistants never, unlike New Model Army or the Smiths, claimed to care or offer any alternative...they are not hypocrites just a rock n roll game band playing the rock n roll game

So moaning is pointless, after all, what did I expect?

They appear for two reasons:

- 1) I liked their first two EP's.
- 2) They may cause this zine to reach people who otherwise would never touch a publication such as this with a barge pole...

...at least they replied to my letters...

Were you surprised at how quickly you became popular? How many copies have the records sold?

Yes, we were really surprised.

I don't think we knew what to expect when the EP came out. The EP has sold about 7-8,000 copies; Safety Net has sold 14,000.

What's your reason for playing in a band? Is it anything more than entertainment? What's being a Shop Assistant all about?

Everyone in the band has very different reasons, mine is that I enjoy it and love writing/recording/playing our songs.

Who or what influenced you in the music that you play?

Lots of things: for Alex-Sex Pistols, folk singers, J&MC; David-Ramones, TV Personalities, J&MC; Sarah-J&MC, Stooges, Stranglers; Laura; Blondie, Ramones J&MC.

Do you have any strongly held beliefs?

We all hold beliefs which are strong and are supportive of various worthy causes.

How were your dates with the Jesus & Mary Chain? What do you think of them, do you think playing 20 minute sets for £4 is justified? What are your views on gig prices etc.?

It was great playing with them. I think they're one of the best bands ever and they were very nice to us. Whether seeing a 20 minute set for £4 is justified depends on your attitude towards 'value for money'; whether you consider £4 to see a brilliant band in performances to be good value or whether you consider it better spent on something else...like 4 pints of beer, 3 packs of cigarettes etc....let's face it, pop music isn't much to do with 'value for money'.

Do you believe in fairies?
No, but I've seen one (when I was very wee).

What's life like in Edinburgh?
Edinburgh is a very nice, picturesque city, as long as you don't venture to the outskirts where they hide all the schemes & tower blocks. There are a few good places to go but not many venues. A few good bands are: The Dragsters, Pizzbombs, Jesse Garon & the desperadoes.

Most of your lyrics seem somewhat lightweight. Do you think songs about relationships are a bit redundant, aren't there other (and possibly more worthwhile) subjects to sing about?

I wouldn't say that most of our songs are lightweight; a lot of them are about relationships, but there's far more to them than just a boy meets girl (or vice versa) thing. "Safety Net" is partly about 'running away from home' and how other people can fuck up your life for you; "Nature Lover" is about being bored and resorting to drugs for fun (which we don't do); "It's up to you" is about hope and futility...They're all based on things which affect, or could affect, us, and most other people as well.

Why do you sign your letters 'Shop Assistants', isn't this impersonal?(or did you all hold the pen?).

Well, everyone writes to 'Shop Assistants'.

Why did you release a 12" version of the 2nd single with exactly the same tracks on it as the 7", isn't this a bit of a ripoff?

I thought releasing a 12" with the same tracks as the 7" wasn't ripping anyone off 'cos the purchaser has a clear choice, not influenced by the inclusion of an extra track. The reason for having a 12" (I don't like them personally) was so people in foreign countries could buy our records more easily 'cos export companies don't take 7"ers in large quantities so if you only have a 7" version then it becomes very expensive to buy. You also get a much better sound from 12" singles, in case anyone is into that sort of thing. No-one seems to particularly care about a move which seemed like a good non-rip off idea, so maybe people would prefer to have an extra track, so look out for single No3 with bonus track!(Now out).

I then asked about future plans and got given a long list of gigs that have now passed.... Shop Assistants c/o 21a Alva St. Edinburgh, Scotland.

Ta to David...

(enclose s.a.e.)

LEEDS... Aaaaagh?!

Leeds is a largish northern city. It's where I spend about 30 weeks of the year... this is a scene report...

I won't go on about Chumbawamba, you're probably already sick and tired of them after that interview...So what else has Leeds to offer?

Music: Er...not much unless you're into 'PoP!' or gothic bands...there seems to be plenty of those...ah yes, the Incest Brothers- hardly an outfit that one would term serious...hardly an outfit one would term good, but a brothers' live event is not to be missed just for their humour and sheer utter silliness....and a song played in time is rare indeed...amazing. Check out their tracks on the 'Crisis...what Crisis?' compilation tape. (review and address elsewhere.).

Also from Leeds but on a totally plain are Tree of Life who used to sound (to quote a friend) like Gong at their punkiest...way weird...they're now supposed to be undergoing changes in musical direction, can't wait to see what they come up with. Nice people (lots of them as well) and an excellent band...

There must be other intelligent musical lifeforms in Leeds, however I don't know of them but other bands are in the throes of forming or practising so maybe the future holds more on the musical front...who knows? Just a word for Civilised Society? from Batley who, whilst not being a Leeds band are very local and can be pretty good tho' a disturbing metal influence is starting to show-they have an LP out soon, if not now, on Manic Ears...

Gigs: Well apart from Adam and Eves which is rapidly going from bad to unbearable there's little else except for the very occasional independently arranged gig...the last one of which I attended (Conflict/Potential Threat/Oi Polloi/Chumbawamba/Civilised Society/City Indians/AOA) ended in a riot with 34 arrests, loss of the university as a venue, and a lot of money made for Leeds Bust fund & payment of ALP fines...I've had enough over it all, it achieved nothing of any worth and all I saw was a lot of very pissed punks acting macho and stupid...ho hum...

Contacts

Leeds ~~Squatters~~ Squatters, Leeds anarchists, and maybe Tree of Life: Box ASS, 46 The Calls, Leeds LS2.

Incest Brothers: Box 32 & above address.

NO LIMITS is Leeds' weekly (!) anarchist paper incorporating TV listings...although it varies in quality of content and having NO LIMITS NO LONGER EXISTS. NEW LEEDS nerally excellent to follow-which

further add @IST MAG ON THE WAY?????? keeping up with anarchist activ...the price varies but 20-25p and an SAE to Box ASS, 59 Cookridge st., LEEDS LS2 should secure you a copy...go for it! Or try subscribing!

Political Asylum

" Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes! Now this is what I want! Slow, folky, rocky and emotionally uplifting, packing a punch in a nice way...the sort of record that puts a smile on my face, a skip in my step and a gleam in my eye...and god they were so wonderful in Southampton:-Buy this you bastards!" ...

...or so I wrote about Political Asylum's debut £7" EP 'Winter'...and by the metal riffs of Onslaught I meant every word of it. P.A. were a band I'd heard loads about but never actually heard until April last year when I saw them, bought the EP and fell in love with it...So...I decided to interview them...(Hah! Bet that surprised you! It didn't? Oh...) YEAH!

What sort of reaction do you feel you get at gigs around the country? Do you ever get problems with acceptance by punks because of your appearance/music? (Neither of which are particularly 'punk').

Keith: I think we get a fairly good reaction despite our sound and look not conforming to any punk cliches. I suppose that we're fortunate in that we appeal to a broad range of people, from your average nonpunk person to hardcore fans.

Ramsey: Yeah, usually we get a pretty good reaction, though its difficult to tell. Sometimes you'll get loads of people dancing which is always good to see, but other times everyone just stands still and watches, which again is usually good as it means that they are at least taking it all in. Sometimes when we think that we've gone down really shit loads of folk will come up and praise us to the skies, so it ~~all~~ takes all sorts. As far as I know we've never had any problems with not looking particularly punky, which, of course, is how it should be ('it doesn't matter what you look like, it's what's inside etc.') We

do attract a very wide range of people to our gigs; a lot of punks and metalers but also a lot of folk into rock stuff, and just normal people, and again there's never been any trouble BETWEEN these kind of folk, which is how it should be...I don't suppose our music is particularly 'punk' but then again I don't think that it's particularly anything really.

Was the fusion of punk and rock influences in your sound a deliberate act on your part? Do you feel you are different or special in the 'punk' movement?

Keith: It was not so much deliberate as inevitable due to the mixture of people in the band. The 'punk' influence came from the early days, and remains through Ramsey, the only person left in the band with any 'punk' connections. The rock influence began with Stephen, our guitarist (him and Ramsey formed the band), who was always into rock rather than punk music. As a result Ramsey's early punky songs were given a more rock interpretation by Stephen. (These two also write most of the music together).

Ramsey: No, not really, there isn't anything contrived or deliberate about the music. First and foremost, it's what WE LIKE. If we didn't like it we wouldn't play it, it is as simple as that. The fact that that music also appeals to a wide range of other people is encouraging for us, and pretty handy, but we don't play the music we do just to appeal to lots of people, by that logic we should be churning out bland chart sort of stuff. What we do is 'special' to me,,I get an incredible kick out of it, and it means a lot to me and as I said before, everything else is secondary. I don't really care where we stand in conjunction with the punk movement or any other youth cult. We are what we are and we play what we play; people of whatever musical persuasion can take it or leave it (though obviously we'd rather they all took it!)

Some of your stuff is quite folky...do you like folk music? Keith: I think that comes from Ramsey's singing, he likes a lot of folk music.

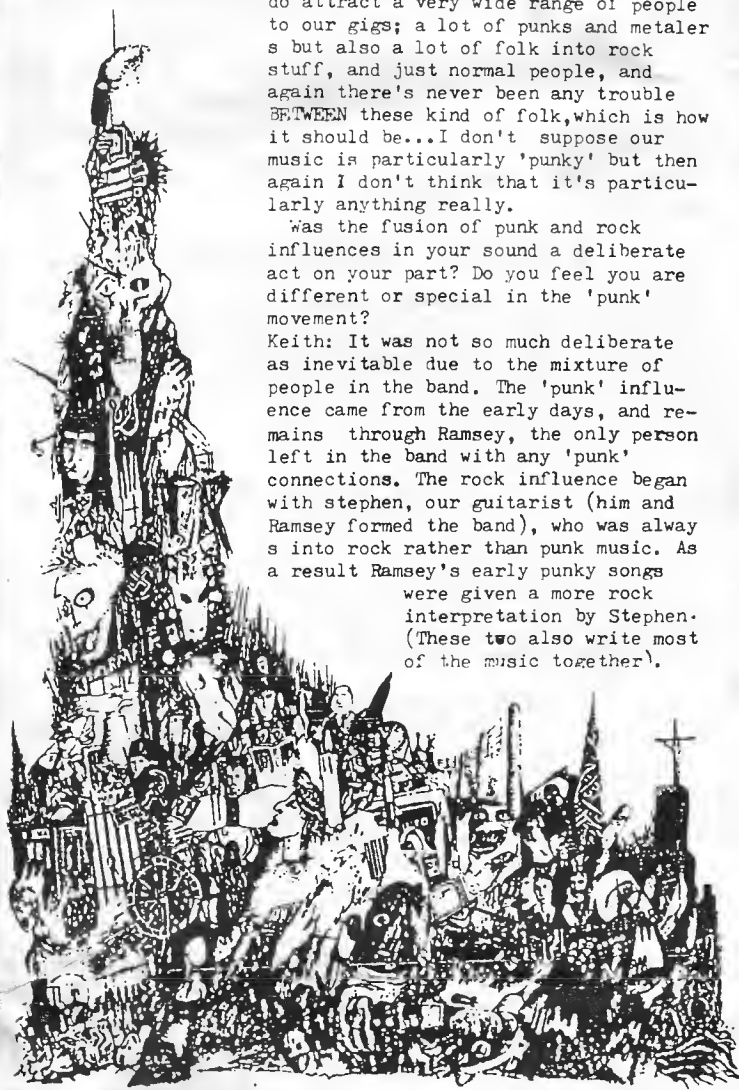
Ramsey: I'm the only one in the band with enough good taste and sense to appreciate the delights of good folk music, though I don't like it all, but some folk music is very, very wonderful, very beautifully played, full of emotion, and very political quite often. All you out there in readerland listen to anything you can get your hands on by Christy Moore, the Moving Hearts and Leon Rosselson. Although the rest of the band don't like folk music as such they listen to alot of very 'soft' music such as Camel, Gong, The Enid, Mike Oldfield etc, etc. which I suppose might have some folky touches. I'd love to do some acoustic stuff (we, as in the band, are toying with the idea) but the main drawback to that is lack of lyrics, we don't have enough for all our 'electric' music, let alone going into folky stuff as well... Being quite well known for being anti-drugs what are your feelings on the greatest mindfucker of all drugs-television? Do you feel it has any positive aspects? How about other legal drugs such as alcohol/tobacco?

Keith: I think alot of people watch it far too much for their own good. Too many people just switch it on automatically as they go into the room and watch it out of habit. They sit there switching channels looking for something to allow them to forget themselves. You're right, it is a dangerous drug and gives people a distorted view of reality if they're not careful. Of course it does have positive aspects-alot of the current affairs programmes and documentaries are excellent and alot of good quality comedy and films get shown. Personally I only turn it on if there's something I actually want to watch on it. I haven't let it become a sort of nervous reaction.

Ramsey: Television is basically alot of shit. It does have its good aspects, the odd good film, some good comedy, especially the old black and white gods (Harold Lloyd) is the only thing that's made me wish I had a video), but basically its whole purpose is one of social control. Put it this way; TV, in practically everything it transmits, is basically supportive of the present system, it doesn't criticise in any meaningful way our whole current ethos, capitalism, ever expanding consumption and production, exploitation, patriarchy. Sure, the odd documentary highlights some particularly nasty practise, but what does this do? Makes us believe that good old democracy is able to right its own wrongs, or alternatively, along with the rest of the mass media, makes us even more frightened and alienated: 'Oh god, rape and mugging is increasing etc., what can we do?', and divided and thus easier to keep under control...

As for other drugs, yeah, well as you say, we are pretty strongly opposed to drugs, none of us do any, except Stephen has the odd joint once every blue moon. We don't really see the point in them, we don't need to spend vast wads of cash, and fuck with our minds and bodies to enjoy ourselves? The same with legal drugs really. Stephen and Keith drink, me & Ewan, very little. None of us smoke, except Ewan who is trying to stop. As for the rest of leral drugs, all the shit they pump you with when you get ill cos you're living in the midat of industrial capitalism and get cancer cos of all the shit they put in your food etc. etc., well as with most things today, they are just there to make money for the drug companies involved.

How do you feel about the rock 'n' roll cliché/ethic?



called 'love songs', though of course that does not excuse in any way the sexism of rock music. I think listeners can be influenced but not necessarily so. I mean, I listen to a lot of different kinds of music, but I don't take in everything I listen to. I mean, I'm not a supporter of the IRA, even though Christy Moore is, or a supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, even though I like some early Redskins music. Obviously I don't regard myself to be sexist, though whether I am in practise presumably only other people could tell you...

I've heard your lyrics described as "simplistic" - do you think this is true? On the EP there seemed to be a great emphasis on war; have antiwar songs become just another punk cliché (like mohicans and boots)? How do you think we can get rid of war forever? Is CND useful in this respect or are other methods needed?

Keith: I suppose the only way to get rid of war forever is through educating people from early childhood that violence, selfishness, competition, power, hierarchy etc are wrong. If enough people stopped thinking and behaving in terms of these ideologies then there would be no reason for conflict. I suppose CND and its members believe in this need, but the organisation doesn't exist to get rid of war, only to stop its escalation to the point of nuclear armageddon, so its use is limited as an organisation. Most of the members though probably have a more widespread interest in peace.

Ramsey: Yes, I think its probably the case that a lot of our lyrics are very simplistic. To a certain extent this is inevitable. Unless you are going to write incredibly long songs, or have them filled with tons of imagery and metaphors, lyrics are not the place for indepth discussion of various issues.

Let's face it people spend their whole lives discussing and arguing about matters like vegetarianism, nuclear arms or whatever (I'm not so sure if they do - De Ed,) and have written thousands of books on such subjects, so obviously a few verses on the topic is going to be pretty superficial. But then again I don't think that is necessarily a bad thing. Sometimes slogans can be very effective ways of transmitting ideas. As I've said before, people do claim to have changed cos of our lyrics so obviously they do have some use simplistic or not. I don't actually hold the view that all our lyrics are simplistic though, our lyrics have been praised to the skies by some people as stimulating and thought provoking and like famous poets etc. & other people have said that they are clichéd crap, so people's opinions are pretty subjective anyway. Yup, there was a bit of a warlike feel to the EP and this is only by chance in that the songs we chose for a varied EP musically all happened to be about war, that was just fluke. We do actually cover lots of topics (though not as many as we would like as we all find it very difficult to express our thoughts and feelings and emotions in lyric form). I suppose to a certain extent singing about war has become another cliché, but until wars have ceased then it will be a necessary cliché.

We will only ever get rid of war when we get rid of domination. War is just a rather violent and large scale application of domination. Yes I do think CND have a part to play, in that people don't just wake up one day brimming with anarchist or whatever ideas, and pressure groups such as CND are often very good introductions to more radical politics (it certainly was to me, eg I bought my first ever anarchist magazine on a CND march way back in 1980). Pressure groups themselves, be they CND or Greenpeace or whatever are doomed to failure as nothing will change unless the whole system is changed, little reforms here and there (if they are forthcoming at all) only add to the system's strength as people think that the system is basically just and that aberrations can be righted; fucking with the environment, nuclear weapons etc are integral parts of the present world system, domination etc. That's not to say that pressure groups don't do some good, I think they do do a lot, & should be supported, but not as a means of achieving change, as I think that's unrealistic for the reasons I've just stated...

Will you be doing another record to follow up 'Winter'? How well has it sold, and have you been pleased with the reaction? Ramsey: Yup, definitely. We are actually going into the studios to do some new stuff, hopefully 4 tracks, for release on vinyl (presumably a 12"), That's in december, so with a bit of luck the record should be out early in the new year. As for Winter, well that's sold ok I suppose, around 3000 so far, though we could've sold at least ten times that with better national distribution & publicity. Reactions to it have varied from fucking brilliant to bloody amazing but I think people are being far too modest in their praise as it's a million times better than that! Seriously though, most people that have got to hear it seem to have really liked it which is gratifying, it's always nice to have other people appreciate what you're doing.....



Is the band just a way of farming your egos or is it something more than that? What point is there, if any, to Political Asylum?

Keith: It's certainly not a way of farming our egos, I think we've got a lot more integrity than that. We play because we enjoy doing it, it gives vent to our creativity, it's a form of expression, and everyone needs that to some degree - it's a healthy thing. We also enjoy entertaining the audience at gigs - then it becomes a two way outlet - for us and them, and it makes everyone feel good. If we can inspire anyone via the lyrics then that's an added bonus.

Ramsey: Well obviously the rock 'n' roll ethic, if it could be called that, of sex 'n' drugs 'n' rock 'n' roll and don't give a shit about anything else cos it's making us lots of money is a load of bollocks, but I don't think we could be accused of partaking in that. I mean, we don't charge high prices for gigs people at our gigs don't get beaten up by bouncers, and we don't make any money out of what we do, and our records and tapes are cheap to. Yeah, I suppose to a certain extent you've got to have a large ego to be in a band, in that you have to believe in what you're doing, but we don't think that just cos we can make music, that we're better than anyone else cos of that, that is just ridiculous. The point of Political Asylum? Well, to provide us with entertainment/enjoyment and to hopefully also do that for other people, and to hopefully make them think via the lyrics. We've had people writing to us saying that our lyrics had changed them, made them become vegetarian or whatever so I guess that's some point...

Rock music is renowned for its sexist lyrics; what are your views on sexism? Do you think listening to music with sexist lyrics rubs off on the listener? Are you sexist in any way?

Keith: I'm not sure whether those sexist lyrics rub off on the listener or if it's just that people who are sexist anyway tend to listen to that kind of music. It's a kind of chicken and egg situation, I'm not sure which came first...

Ramsey: Sexism is obviously a lot of shit, it's just part of the whole patriarchal 'civilisation' that we inhabit, which inculcates (?) domination as a way, a desirable and supposedly natural way of life, man's domination of nature, man's domination of woman and man's domination of man. I don't think you will be able to get rid of sexism and patriarchy 'til you are rid of domination. As for the music, well most music is sexist not just rock music, most of the stuff in the charts, the so

POLITICAL
ASYLUM

What's the most beautiful thing you can think of?
 Keith: The pasta I can smell cooking in the kitchen (I'm starving!).
 Ramsey: I dunno, I suppose things and people that I love...
 Do you think voting can actually achieve anything? Do you think some parties create a better atmosphere for change than others?
 Keith: I suppose it may seem like a choice between the devil and the deep blue sea at times, but I would vote labour or liberal (as yet undecided) than not vote at all, cos at least it keeps the Tories out. I'm not sure that the labour or liberal parties create a better atmosphere for change but at least certain things won't get worse like the welfare state.
 Ramsey: No, not really, not on any large significant scale. Different parties cannot create a better atmosphere for change as they are all opposed to change-as part of the present system as each other. They are integral parts of everything that is shitty today. In fact, ironically, it may be the Tories that create a 'better' atmosphere for change cos they seem to like pushing people around. But then again so do Labour, as everyone always seem to conveniently forget. It was Labour that introduced cruise to Britain and nuclear power to Britain and armed the police guarding nuclear power stations and started cutting expenditure on hospitals in 1979, and first used troops to break strikes (In Northern Ireland in 1971 when the power-workers went on strike)...I could go on and on about what bastards they are. I've already (being such a wild revolutionary) spoiled my ballot paper twice in elections (district & European) and no doubt come the next general election I will do the same.
 How do you feel about things such as prostitution and porn? Is censorship and restriction any answer? What do you think causes the need for them in the first place?
 Keith: Personally I don't like them and find them offensive but I don't think they can, or should, be banned. What anybody wants to do is up to them, so long as it doesn't encroach on anyone else. Asking what causes the need for them is a big question, but I suppose the alienation of today's impersonal urban society has something to do with it.
 Ramsey: I don't know to be honest, I haven't actually really thought either of them through sufficiently to decide where I stand on such matters. Obviously pornography degraded women treating them as mere objects etc. and should be opposed, though there again I'm not sure how, certainly not by censorship. I mean, you start censoring pornography then what's next? Homosexuals perhaps? Again I'm not sure what leads to the 'need' or certainly prevalence of these though presumably our fucked up society has a lot, if not all, to answer for...

At Southampton at the end of 'Do they care?', where Ramsey says "Do they fuck" he said something like: "Merry, we don't usually say things like that" - How do you feel about 'foul language' (as my Nan calls it)? Is it a barrier or an aid to communication?
 Keith: I don't mind swearing. It's only considered ~~swearing~~ foul language by convention of society. However this convention does make it a barrier to mass communication. Filling songs full of 'fucks' will only turn some people off rather than onto what you're singing about, though it is occasionally good for effect like at the end of 'Do they care?'. I don't think we'll be doing any more songs in the style of 'Autonomous Youth', so your mother might even like us!
 Ramsey: Fuck me, did I say that?! I think you must've misheard me, unless I was pulling the piss. (Well at least one other person heard you say it Ramsey, so you don't get off it that easy!-The Ed.). What I might have been saying was 'sorry we don't play that song anymore' (you said that after you said the previous quote-De ED) as 'Do they Care?' was our last song and folk were shouting for various songs that we don't play anymore. I've got nothing against swearing, my own conversation is full of it as you may have gathered from the interview answers. Songs however are a bit different, as Keith says many people are put off by swearing. This is not so important as the fact that usually swearing doesn't add anything to the songs so there's no point in putting them in, especially as to do so would only alienate part of our potential audience. Thus when writing songs we try not to put any swearing in as it doesn't really serve any purpose. In fact it can often become repetitive and thus lose the impact of any anger that is trying to be brought across in a song...
 Anything to add?
 Ramsey: First off thanks very much for the interview, some excellent questions (ooh thanks!) which me and ol' Keithybabes enjoyed answering, it's nice to be forced to think now and again!

The band for those wondering consists of myself on vocals, Keith on drums and occasional vocals, Stephen on guitar and more than occasional vocals and Ewan on bass and never any vocals for some reason, fuck knows why, though perhaps it's cos he can't sing?

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T-shirts: 2 designs £2 each (50p to ALP!) enquire to: Jen, 3 Baggrave End, Barsby, Leics, LE7 0HO.

This obvious crap continued from page 3.
 ...alternative, a gathering of people from many spectra of non mainstream society together for the purpose of communicating, meeting and sharing something very special; a love of being alive. It is a celebration by people for people and because it isn't organised by some acceptable rich money making promoter and cos it isn't under the direct control of either the state or the wealthy and powerful it has been and is regarded as a threat. It is a threat because it is so visual that people can't help but notice it...and if people start to notice things outside of the strictly regulated confines of mainstream society then good lord they could be motivated to actually change themselves or at least question what is going on - and that really is a threat!
 And thus the media, the government and the rich have done their best to discredit and smash the Stonehenge festival and the people involved therein...only they won't ever succeed because life is that important.
 In effect by taking control of our lives (which is in reality what this article is about I suppose) we are bound to come into conflict with the authorities, confrontation in an unfree society is inevitable, but this can never stop us because whatever we do, in demonstrating, in celebrating our lives, in creating our lives (that word again) in changing the ways that we relate to each other, in rejecting role models and seeing each other in the light of what we all are; frail, weak, warm human beings who all need to love and be loved...then confrontation will always occur...but is our lives and our planet that are at stake...and I'm not throwing those away.....
 ...Mark...30/1/87...

- NOW LET'S HAVE SOME COMMENTS! J

DRUGS NOT NEEDED

Sinking in, springing up...walking across the green turf, sun streaming through the branches, a soft warm scented wind and the rustle of creatures in the leaves, the soft shrill of birdsong...
 Arms outstretched, face lifted to the sky, warmed by the sunlight, joy in the heart, strength found with each passing second as the world stretches past.....

The cool depths of the trees envelope me as I drift down the avenues, the leaves filtering the light into thin strips of golden fluorescence. The smell of life fills the air enveloping everything, senses tingling, mind exploding in the beauty of it all, merging into it all, losing identity into the whole...Joy as everything comes together and finally makes sense.

I touched your eyes and you never flinched. Stroked your face and felt its cold embrace...tried to tear down a fence and only built it higher...yet more wasted words, yet another wasted day...1/7/86.

CRISIS - WHAT CRISIS? compilation tape fl & SAE & contribution to Bust Fund from Duesy, 360 Meltham Rd, Netherton, Huddersfield, W. Yorks. HD4 7EH. Excellent tape with ace stuff from Ol Polloi, Generic, Chumbawamba, Bomb Ad. Instinct, Incest Brothers (split 12" EP out soon!), Culture etc...YEAH!

More fun than a balloon

Penitentiary Distribution is a rad little distribution service run by that lovable little skateboarding spazmo Cockney and although he now lives in Leeds it's best to write to his Brighouse address as it's a guaranteed way of sending for a lovely little list of goodies so do so now! And the address in Raising Hell No.14 is no longer in use so...Cockney/ 2 Thornhill Rd/ Rastrick/ Brighouse/ W. Yorks/ HD6 3AX/

ZPRP is a subsidiary of the DOUGHERTYFAIRE CORPORATION 1992...nick the P.A. pages layout ideas from Raising Hell...P.S. If you're going to write a shitty two line letter or just complain rather than offer constructive criticism don't bother writing - cos I won't reply. COMMUNICATE.

HEY ANGIE - WE LOVE YOU!

RAY - WHY NO WRITE? (RAY) WHERE?